NO. 19
PEP COMICS
ACTION DETECTIVE ADVENTURE
10¢
SEPT.
U.S. DEFENSE PROJECT SUBMARINE DIVISION
NOVICK
CRIMINALS EVERY-WHERE!... BEWARE! YOU CANT ESCAPE the HANGMAN
T.N.T.

USE THIS ENTIRE COUPON!!!

JUST PRINT PLAINLY ON THIS COUPON, YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AGE AND SEND IT TO ME WITH 10¢ TO COVER COST OF MAILING AND HANDLING.

Joe Higgins
Room 315
60 Hudson St.
New York City

DEAR JOE,
PLEASE ENROLL ME AS A MEMBER OF THE **SHIELD G-MAN CLUB.** I AM ENCLOSING THIS COUPON TOGETHER WITH TEN CENTS TO COVER THE COSTS OF HANDLING AND MAILING MY BADGE AND IDENTIFICATION CARD.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
AGE _____

EXACT COPY OF BADGE IN THREE COLORS RED-WHITE-BLUE

CUT ON THIS LINE

Bulletin #3. WHY WAS THE COMET KILLED.

It seems as if the untimely death of the Comet has caused considerable controversy among our readers. However, Bob Dickering his brother, (THE HANGMAN) has received numerous letters congratulating him on his appearance in the pages of PEP COMICS. While we are trying our darnedest to satisfy all of our readers, we know that we cannot please everyone. To all you readers who are upset at the death of the Comet, let me remind you that the Comet did commit a murder. Although unintentional, an officer of the law was killed. Retribution caught up with John Dickering and he paid the supreme penalty, so dear readers if you have learned to enjoy the adventures of the Comet, remember that his brother in the role of THE HANGMAN will carry on as gangland's most feared menace, and I am sure that you are going to enjoy his adventures in each and every issue, and of course I don't want you to forget all about Joe Higgins and his pal Dusty. We are still going to start off the pages of PEP COMICS each and every month not forgetting SHIELD WIZARD COMICS.

PEP COMICS is your magazine. We want to give you the stuff that you enjoy reading. We don't know what you want until you let us know, so boys and girls keep your mail coming fast and furious. If I do not answer it on this page, I will send you a personal letter discussing it

Thousands of readers have written in for a picture of the SHIELD and DUSTY. On the back cover of August PEP COMICS, and September ZIP COMICS, TOP NOTCH, and BLUE RIBBON COMICS, is a 4 color picture of the SHIELD and DUSTY, including Betty Warren, Mamie Mazda, and our pal Ju Ju Watson. A few of the outstanding members this month are listed below. I'll write you all direct.

Arthur Blevins
Baywood, Va.

George Balbi
50 Willow St.
Bklyn, N.Y.

Charles G. Tolliver
203 Hamilton St.
Fairmont, W.Va.

Joe Higgins (The Shield)

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THE ORIGINAL
SHIELD
WITH DUSTY
THE BOY DETECTIVE
IN THE HOME OF J.W. TAYLOR, SPECIAL GOVERNMENT APPOINTEE ASSIGNED TO THE TASK OF HEADING THE SALE OF DEFENSE BONDS. THE TELEPHONE RINGS CONTINUOUSLY--BUT NO RESPONSE. THEN, THAT INDOMITABLE DUO, THE SHIELD AND DUSTY, THE BOY DETECTIVE BURST IN, AND SEE...
JEHOSEPHAT! HE'S HANGED HIMSELF!
DEAD AS A DOORNAIL! I KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHING WRONG WHEN HE DIDN'T ANSWER OUR CALL! FUNNY, HE SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS THE VERY DAY I WAS ASSIGNED TO ASSIST HIM IN HIS BOND-SALE DRIVE!

TAYLOR HAD AN ENVIABLE REPUTATION FOR HONESTY, DUSTY, AND YET, HE HANGED HIMSELF, SEEMINGLY AS SOON AS HE KNEW I WAS WORKING WITH HIM! IT LOOKS KIND OF BAD, BUT THERE'S MORE TO IT, THAN MEETS THE EYE!
NEXT DAY, IN BETTY WARREN'S APARTMENT...
WOW! THEY CHECKED UP ON TAYLOR'S BOOKS, AND FOUND 'EM ALL PHONEYED UP! NO WONDER HE HUNG HIMSELF!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT, JU JU!
EVERYONE KNEW TAYLOR WAS AN HONEST MAN! THIS WILL BE AN AWFUL BLACK EYE FOR THE GOVERNMENT! PEOPLE ARE BOUND TO BE SUSPICIOUS ABOUT THE BONDS! IT'LL HURT THE SALES!
HIYA, FOLKS! I'VE GOT SOME STARTLING NEWS FOR YOU!
HELLO, JOE! NOTHING CAN STARTLE ANYONE AFTER READING THIS MORNING'S PAPER!
IN A NUTSHELL, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAS JUST APPOINTED THE SHIELD TO TAKE OVER TAYLOR'S JOB!
WHAT?
THE PRESIDENT..ER..MADE SOME FLATTERING REMARKS; SOMETHING ABOUT THE SHIELD STANDING FOR EVERYTHING THAT WAS AMERICAN AND STUFF LIKE THAT!.. ANYWAY, HE'S IN!
NUTS! I'M THE GUY WHO ALWAYS HELPS THE SHIELD OUTTA HIS JAMS, 'N I NEVER GET ANY CREDIT!
THE SHIELD APPARENTLY APPRECIATES YOU, JU JU, BECAUSE..
HE TOLD ME TO ASK YOU IF YOU'D BE HIS RIGHT HAND MAN! HE NEEDS YOU BADLY!
YOU BETCHA HE NEEDS MY JU JU!
BOY, AND HOW, I WILL!

JU JU WASTES NO TIME...
I'M TAKIN' YOU ALONG WITH ME! WITH YOUR FACE 'N FIGURE 'N MY SALESMANSHIP, WE'LL SELL A MILLION DOLLARS WORTH O' BONDS!
STEP RIGHT UP FER THE BEST INVESTMENT YOU'LL EVER MAKE! AN INVESTMENT IN YER UNCLE SAM!
SAVE THAT PATRIOTIC HOOEY! WE'RE NOT SHELLIN' OUT OUR DOUGH SO GUYS LIKE TAYLOR CAN GET THEIR HANDS ON IT!
PATRIOTISM, NUTS!
WAIT A MINUTE! I'VE GOT CONFIDENCE IN MY GOVERNMENT, AND I DON'T LIKE THOSE REMARKS!
NOR I!
IZZATSO! WHADDA YA GONNA DO ABOUT IT?
A FREE-FOR-ALL ENSUES...
HEY, LEGGO!
THE SHIELD AND DUSTY SWOOP INTO THE FRAY....
START A RIOT, WILL YOU?
POW
HERE'S A DIFFERENT BRAND OF CHIN-MUSIC!
EASY, EVERYBODY! EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL NOW! THESE FELLOWS ARE PROBABLY PROFESSIONAL HECKLERS!
OWOO! WHAT HIT ME?
MY POOR LITTLE JUJY! DID BAD MEN HURT MY LAMBIE PIE?

LATER...
WELL BOYS, HOW DID YOU MAKE OUT TODAY?
LOUSY, CHIEF! WE STARTED A NICE RIOT, BUT THE SHIELD AND HIS KID BROKE IT UP!
THEY'RE GONNA RUIN THINGS FOR US, I TELL YOU. THE CROWDS GO NUTS EVERY TIME THEY SEE EM' YOU GOTTA DO SOMETHING!
HMM.. PERHAPS YOURE RIGHT! THE SHIELD MAY PROVE SOMEWHAT OF A NUISANCE!
I COULD USE THOSE TWO IN MY ORGANIZATION. EVERY MAN HAS HIS PRICE AND THEY MUST HAVE THEIRS. I KNOW HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THEM-- THROUGH JOE HIGGINS!
IN JOE'S APARTMENT...
I WONDER WHAT'S KEEPING JOE AND DUSTY?
EASY, SWEETIE, THIS BIG STEAK WILL FIX UP YOUR EYE IN NO TIME!
OWOO
WELL, HERE THEY ARE AT LAST!
IT'S A WONDER YOU WOULDN'T BE AROUND WHEN TROUBLE STARTS. YOURE SUPPOSED TO BE IN ON THIS DRIVE, TOO, YOU KNOW!
ER..AH.. EXCUSE ME THE PHONE
R..R..R..I..N..G
HELLO!....WHAT!!! WHAT'S THAT!.... HMM..... ALL RIGHT, I'LL TELL HIM, MR. STEELE!
C'MON, DUSTY, WE'VE GOTTA FIND THE SHIELD! I'VE GOT AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR HIM!

OUTSIDE, THE DUO QUICKLY BECOME THE SHIELD AND DUSTY, THE BOY DETECTIVE..
WHAT'S UP, SHIELD?
I DON'T KNOW YET, BUT WE'LL SOON FIND OUT!
THE SHIELD AND DUSTY ARRIVE AT THEIR DESTINATION...
MY FRIEND JOE HIGGINS TOLD ME AN ERIC STEELE WANTS TO SEE ME! WHICH ONE OF YOU IS HE?
I AM ERIC STEELE, SHIELD! COME IN, WON'T YOU?
I'LL BE BRIEF, SHIELD! YOU HAVE GREAT RESOURCE AND INTELLIGENCE! I COULD USE YOU, AND THAT BOY OF YOURS IN MY ORGANIZATION!
WHAT ORGANIZATION?
I AM A MAN OF GREAT INFLUENCE, SHIELD--MORE THAN ANYBODY REALIZES! I CAN MAKE MYSELF MASTER OF THIS COUNTRY IN A SHORT TIME! MY ORGANIZATION IS NATION-WIDE! LET US NOT FOOLISHLY FIGHT EACH OTHER!
TOGETHER, WE CAN TAKE OVER THE REINS OF THE GOVERNMENT! POWER WILL BE OURS!.. WEALTH BEYOND OUR DREAMS---WHAT DO YOU SAY, SHIELD?
I'LL SAY MY PIECE EVEN MORE BRIEFLY, YOU SCURVY RAT!
L..LET ME DOWN!
I LIKE THIS COUNTRY AS IT IS--AND SO DO THE REST OF THE AMERICANS! I DON'T KNOW WHETHER YOU'RE JUST A HOPPED-UP SCREWBALL OR NOT, BUT IF I CATCH YOU AT ANY TRICKS IT'LL BE TOO BAD FOR YOU!
HEY, BUD! YOUR SHOELACE IS UNTIED!
HUH?
5

BOY, IF YOU'RE DUMB ENOUGH TO FALL FOR THAT I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT THIS HALF-BAKED OUTFIT!
WHEN THE SHIELD AND DUSTY LEAVE....
FOOLS! YOU WILL RUE THIS DAY! I, ERIC STEELE WILL PAY YOU BACK A THOUSAND-FOLD!
SO THE SHIELD IS POPULAR, EH? WELL, I KNOW A WAY TO DISCREDIT HIM AND RENDER HIS INFLUENCE HARMLESS! THIS ASSISTANT OF HIS, JU JU WATSON, WILL PROVE IDEAL! NOW, LISTEN CAREFULLY TO YOUR INSTRUCTIONS!
LATER..
'N SO, THE SHIELD TOLD JOE 'N ME THAT THIS CARBON-COPY NAPOLEON HAD THE GALL TO ASK HIM TO JOIN UP WITH HIS ORGANIZATION! STEELE ACTUALLY THINKS HE CAN BECOME A DICTATOR HERE! AIN'T THAT A LAUGH?
PERHAPS THE SHIELD OUGHT NOT TO TAKE STEELE TOO LIGHTLY, DUSTY! THEY ONCE LAUGHED AT HITLER, YOU KNOW!
WELL, WE AIN'T GOT TIME TO GAB ABOUT DICTATORS! MAMIE 'N ME GOT A DATE WITH A COUPLA THOUSAND PROSPECTIVE BOND CUSTOMERS! S' LONG!
SO LONG!
AS JU JU DRIVES HIS TRUCK THROUGH THE STREETS..
JU JU, LOOK THAT CAR! IT'S COMIN' STRAIGHT AT US!
WOW! HE MUST BE DRUNK!
HEY, WATCH OUT! YOU'RE GONNA CRASH ME!
SCREECH

NOW YOU DID IT, YOU LUNKHEAD! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU ANYWAY!
WHADDA YA MEAN I DID IT! IT WUZ YOU WHO WUZ TRYIN' TO HOG THE ROAD!
WHILE JU JU IS OCCUPIED IN THE ARGUMENT...
HAW, HAW! SWITCHIN' THESE BAGS IS GONNA BE A CINCH!
WELL, IT'S A GOOD THING FOR YOU I'M IN A HURRY, OR I'D STRAIGHTEN YOU OUT...BUT PLENTY!
OH YEAH!
JU JU PROCEEDS TO HIS DESTINATION.
ALL RIGHT, YOU RED-BLOODED AMERICANS, IF YOUR COUNTRY MEANS ANYTHING TO YOU, NOW'S YOUR CHANCE TO SHOW IT!
ATTA BOY, FOLKS! KEEP SHOOTIN' THAT GREEN STUFF AT US, IT'S A TONIC FOR YOUR UNCLE SAM!
I'LL HAVE TWO BONDS!
THREE FOR ME!
HEY FOLKS! WE'VE BEEN ROBBED! THESE BONDS ARE PHONY!
THIEF! WE WANT OUR MONEY BACK!
LYNCH THE CROOK!
ONE SIDE FOLKS, WE'LL HANDLE THIS!
HOLY COW! TH-THEY ARE PHONY! HOW'D THAT HAPPEN?
THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE, OFFICER! I'M A G-MAN MYSELF! I WOULDN'T..
CUT THE GAB! I'M TAKIN' YOU TO THE STATION HOUSE!

BUT YOU CAN'T PINCH ME! I'M A G-MAN, I TELL YOU! I WOULDN'T PULL ANY STUFF LIKE THAT!
I DUNNO! BIGGER SHOTS THAN YOU HAVE TRIED IT!
LOOK! I GOT A VERY IMPORTANT AMERICANISM RALLY TO ATTEND AT THE MADISON GARDEN TONIGHT! YOU CAN'T HOLD ME HERE! THE SHIELD WILL STRAIGHTEN THIS OUT! I'M HIS RIGHT HAND MAN! YOU TRUST THE SHIELD, DON'T YOU?
SO THE SHIELD'S IN THIS TOO, HUH? FUNNY... THE SHIELD WAS TAYLOR'S ASSISTANT AND TAYLOR COMMITTED SUICIDE FOR SUSPICIOUS REASONS! ON TOP OF THAT, THE SHIELD CONVENIENTLY THERE AT THE TIME! NOW, HE'S MIXED UP WITH YOU!
ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, THE STORY IS RELAYED TO NEWSPAPERS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.
HOLD THE PRESS FOR A NEW HEADLINE!
EDITOR
WUXTRY! READ ALL ABOUT IT!
GRACIOUS! SELLING COUNTERFEIT BONDS!
SO THE SHIELD TURNED GRAFTER TOO!
HMMPH! I WOULDN'T TAKE ONE OF THOSE BONDS FOR NOTHING!
BETTY ALSO READS THE STORY...
GOOD HEAVENS! THIS IS INCREDIBLE! THEY EVEN HINT THAT THE SHIELD IS TRYING TO GET MONEY TO SET HIMSELF UP AS A DICTATOR! I'M GOING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS RIGHT NOW!
LATER, THE SHIELD BURSTS INTO THE POLICE STATION....
THERE'S BEEN A TERRIBLE MISTAKE MADE!
SURE, SHIELD, AND YOU MADE IT!
LOOK, LIEUTENANT, I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THOSE COUNTERFEITS! IT'S A GUY NAMED ERIC STEELE WHO'S TRYING TO SET HIMSELF UP AS A DICTATOR! AND UNLESS I MISS MY GUESS, STEELE KNOWS PLENTY ABOUT THE SUPPOSED SUICIDE OF TAYLOR!
HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO THINK THAT ONE UP?

ALL RIGHT, THEN, DON'T BELIEVE ME, BUT IF I ASSUME FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS AFFAIR THERE'S NO REASON TO HOLD WATSON!
NO I SUPPOSE NOT.. I'LL LET HIM GO!
HIYA, SHIELD!..I KNEW YOU'D STRAIGHTEN IT ALL OUT! I BET THESE COPS FEEL PRETTY SILLY NOW!
HEY.. WHERE'RE THEY TAKIN' YOU! HOLY SMOKE THESE GUYS MUST BE NUTS ARRESTIN' YOU! THEY CAN'T DO THAT!..I..I..
YOU GO DOWN TO THE GARDEN, AND MAKE YOUR SPEECH! -- BE OKAY!
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME WE EVER HAD TO RESIST THE LAW!
BUT ITS GOT TO BE DONE! STEELE'S TOO DANGEROUS TO BE TRIFLED WITH!
HELLO, SHIELD! YOU SURE TOOK YOUR TIME GETTIN' HERE! WHAT HELD YOU?
BELIEVE IT OR NOT, DUSTY, I'M WANTED BY THE POLICE!
LOOK, KID, STEELE WASN'T KIDDING WHEN HE BOASTED ABOUT HIS INFLUENCE! HE'S GOT IT, ALL RIGHT! THOSE STORIES ABOUT ME IN THE PAPERS PROVE THAT!
THERES NO TELLING HOW FAR HE'LL GO UNLESS WE STOP HIM, BUT WE'VE GOT TO BE CAGEY! HE'S PLENTY CLEVER! NOW, HERE'S MY PLAN!
SHOOT, SHIELD!
WHILE AT THE GARDEN PEOPLE POUR IN BY THE THOUSANDS TO ATTEND THE AMERICANISM RALLY
BOY, HAVE I GOT THREE STRIKES AGAINST ME! IF THOSE LOOKS WERE DAGGERS, I'D LOOK LIKE A WALKIN' PIN-CUSHION!

MEANWHILE THE SHIELD, AS JOE HIGGINS, PROCEEDS TO THE HOME OF ERIC STEELE!
I'M JOE HIGGINS, MR. STEELE, AND I WANT TO JOIN UP WITH YOU! I KNOW YOU FRAMED THE SHIELD--AND ANYBODY THAT IS SMART ENOUGH TO DO THAT IS GOOD FOR MY MONEY!
SO, YOU RESPECT MY CLEVERNESS, EH?
WELL, YOU'LL HAVE EVEN MORE REASON TO ADMIRE ME, IN JUST A MOMENT!
AS JOE STEPS THROUGH THE SECRET DOOR...
JEHOSEPHAT! HOW..WHO..
SURPRISED, EH, MR. HIGGINS? I THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE! SOMEBODY ELSE UNDERESTIMATED ME AS YOU CAN EASILY SEE!
BETTY! SHE MUST HAVE COME HERE TO TRY AND HELP THE SHIELD!
YES, JUST AS YOU DID! SHE TRIED TO HOODWINK ME WITH HER CHARMS, AND I'LL GRANT SHE HAS MANY! REALLY YOUR STRATEGY WAS RATHER CRUDE, AND FATAL FOR THE TWO OF YOU!
WHEW! YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A REGULAR ARMY, HAVEN'T YOU? WELL, AS LONG WE'RE GOING TO DIE, THERE'S NO HARM IN TELLING US WHAT YOU INTEND TO DO!
IT MIGHT AMUSE ME!
WHILE NOT FAR AWAY, ATOP A TELEPHONE POLE...
THE SHIELD'S DONE IT! HE'S LIFTED THE RECEIVER OFF THE HOOK! NOW, I'LL JUST ESTABLISH A CONNECTION WITH MY WIRE TAPPING KIT!
HELLO..HELLO..MADISON GARDEN? WHO'S THIS, A REPORTER? SWELL! JUST KEEP YOUR LINE OPEN AND LISTEN FOR THE BIGGEST SCOOP YOU'LL EVER GET IN YOUR LIFE!
BELLS OF HADES! AM I DREAMING?
PRESS ROOM

...ENCE THAT HE IS TALKING INTO AN OPEN PHONE, STEELE CONTINUES HIS BOASTING....
SO MY STORM TROOPERS SURPRISE YOU, EH? WELL, YOU'D BE A LOT MORE SURPRISED IF YOU KNEW HOW MANY OF THEM I HAVE IN THE U.S. ARMY READY TO DO MY BIDDING!
AT THE MOMENT JUJU ALSO DOES SOME SPEECH MAKING BUT OF A DIFFERENT KIND!
THE SHIELD IS YOUR BEST FRIEND--EVERYTHING AMERICA STANDS FOR!
NUTS! THE SHIELD'S TRYING TO BE A DICTATOR AND YOU'RE JUST A STOOGE FOR HIM! HERE'S WHAT WE THINK OF BOTH OF YOU!
SPLASH
OWOO! CUT IT OUT! YOU'RE ALL WRONG! OOF!
JUST THEN, THE REPORTER TEARS TOWARD THE PLATFORM...
STOP, EVERYBODY! HE'S TELLING THE TRUTH!
THE TELEPHONE IS HELD UP TO THE LOUD-SPEAKING SYSTEM....
YES, I, ERIC STEELE, WILL RULE THIS COUNTRY VERY SOON! MY MEN ARE EVERYWHERE!
ALL THOSE WHO OPPOSE ME, WILL MEET THE SAME FATE TAYLOR DID--EVEN THE SHIELD HAS BEEN EFFECTIVELY DISPOSED OF!
BOY, O'BOY, O'BOY! THAT STEELE COULDN'T HAVE PUT HIS NECK FURTHER INTO A NOOSE IF HE TRIED! THE SHIELD OUTSMARTED HIM AFTER ALL!

SMASH!—BR.
BUT ENOUGH OF THIS! I'VE WASTED TOO MUCH TIME WITH YOU ALREADY! NOW YOU DIE!
GALLOPING GHOSTS! NOW I'M IN A SPOT! I'LL HAVE TO EXPOSE MYSELF AS THE SHIELD IN ORDER TO SAVE BETTY'S LIFE!
BUT BEFORE JOE IS FORCED TO EXPOSE HIMSELF...
STAND WHERE YOU ARE! THE PLACE IS SURROUNDED!
WHAT?
JOE TAKES ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION TO DUCK OUT...
WHAT HAPPENED!
—S A TRICK! THERE'S NO ONE HERE!
SMART BOY THAT DUSTY! HE WAS A LIFE-SAVER!
A QUICK TRANSFORMATION AND THE SHIELD STANDS FORTH...
KILL HER! KILL HER QUICK, AND THEN GO FIND THE OTHER ONE!
ALL RIGHT, YOU GOOSE-STEPPING STOOGES, NOW I'LL GIVE THE ORDERS!
UKK!
THE SHIELD AGAIN! BLAST HIM.... HE'LL NOT GET ME!

WHOA, NELLIE! YOU WEREN'T THINKING OF SNEAKING AWAY, WERE YOU?

UGH!

LOOK WHAT I CAUGHT CRAWLING OUT, *SHIELD!*

NICE WORK, DUSTY! I GUESS THAT JUST ABOUT TAKES CARE OF ALL OF THEM!

JUST THEN, THE POLICE POUR IN.

WE TRACED THAT CALL HERE! WHERE IS THIS MUG, STEELE?

RIGHT HERE, READY FOR COLD STORAGE.. AND WHILE WE'RE AT IT, LIEUTENANT, LETS MAKE A CLEAN SLATE OF THIS WHOLE THING!

IT TOOK A LITTLE PERSUADING TO FIND OUT WHERE THEY KEPT THE PHONEY BOND PLATES, BUT HERE THEY ARE! SATISFIED NOW?

WELL, I'LL BE...

NEXT DAY..

WELL, THAT STEELE GAVE THE COUNTRY PLENTY TO THINK ABOUT! THE F.B.I. IS STILL ROUNDING UP HIS ORGANIZATION!

AND BROTHER, WHAT AN ORGANIZATION! SOME OF THE PROMINENT NAMES ALMOST KNOCKED MY HAT OFF! I HATE TO THINK OF WHAT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED IF THE *SHIELD* AND *DUSTY* HADN'T NIPPED HIM IN THE BUD!

I DON'T KNOW, JU JU! I HAVE TOO MUCH FAITH IN OUR LIBERTY-LOVING PEOPLE TO THINK THEY WOULD HAVE FALLEN PREY TO HIS DESIGNS!

YEAH, I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT AT THAT, JOE! YOU SHOULDA' SEEN ME TURN THE TABLES ON TH' GUY WHO PASTED ME WITH A TOMATO LAST NIGHT!

HA, HA! YOU CERTAINLY DID, JU JU! HERE IT IS, IN THE MORNING PAPER!

...U. Troops Now'

EVER NEW, EVER THRILLING! THIS HAS BEEN THE RECORD ESTABLISHED BY THE *SHIELD* AND *DUSTY*, THE SPECTACULAR BOY DETECTIVE ....AND THAT'S WHY *PEP COMICS* HAS BECOME THE NATION'S LARGEST-SELLING COMIC MAGAZINE!

THE HANGMAN
JIM NELSON, INMATE OF THE STATE INSANE ASYLUM, BOLTS FROM HIS ROOM, AND— UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS, CLIMBS THE SPIKE-TIPPED FENCE...THUS, BEGINS AN EPISODE THAT IS DESTINED TO EMBROIL THE HANGMAN IN ONE OF THE WEIRDEST ADVENTURES OF HIS LIFE!
ALMOST OVER THE TOP OF THE FENCE NELSON JAMS HIS LEG ON ONE OF THE UGLY SPIKES
LIMPING AND BLEEDING, NELSON STAGGERS TOWARDS THE CITY...

SPREAD OUT! HE'S GOT A BIG START ON US!
A FEW MOMENTS LATER, THE WHISTLE SOUNDS THE ALARM...
SEVERAL HOURS LATER, IN THE CITY BOB DICKERING AND THELMA GORDON ARE RETURNING FROM A MOVIE...
BOB, LOOK AT THAT MAN! HE'S EITHER BADLY HURT OR DRUNK!
ANYHOW, HE'S GOING INTO THAT APARTMENT HOUSE SO I GUESS HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT!
INSIDE...IN THE APARTMENT OF DOCTOR LUKE DONOVAN, THE MAN WHO SENT JIM NELSON TO THE ASYLUM...
YOU!..WHA...! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
DON'T KILL ME! WE..WE WERE WORKING TOGETHER! YOU CAN KEEP JIM NELSON'S FORTUNE! ONLY, DON'T KILL ME, PLEASE!
HMM..THERE'S THAT FELLOW AGAIN! HE SURE CAME OUT OF THERE IN A HURRY!
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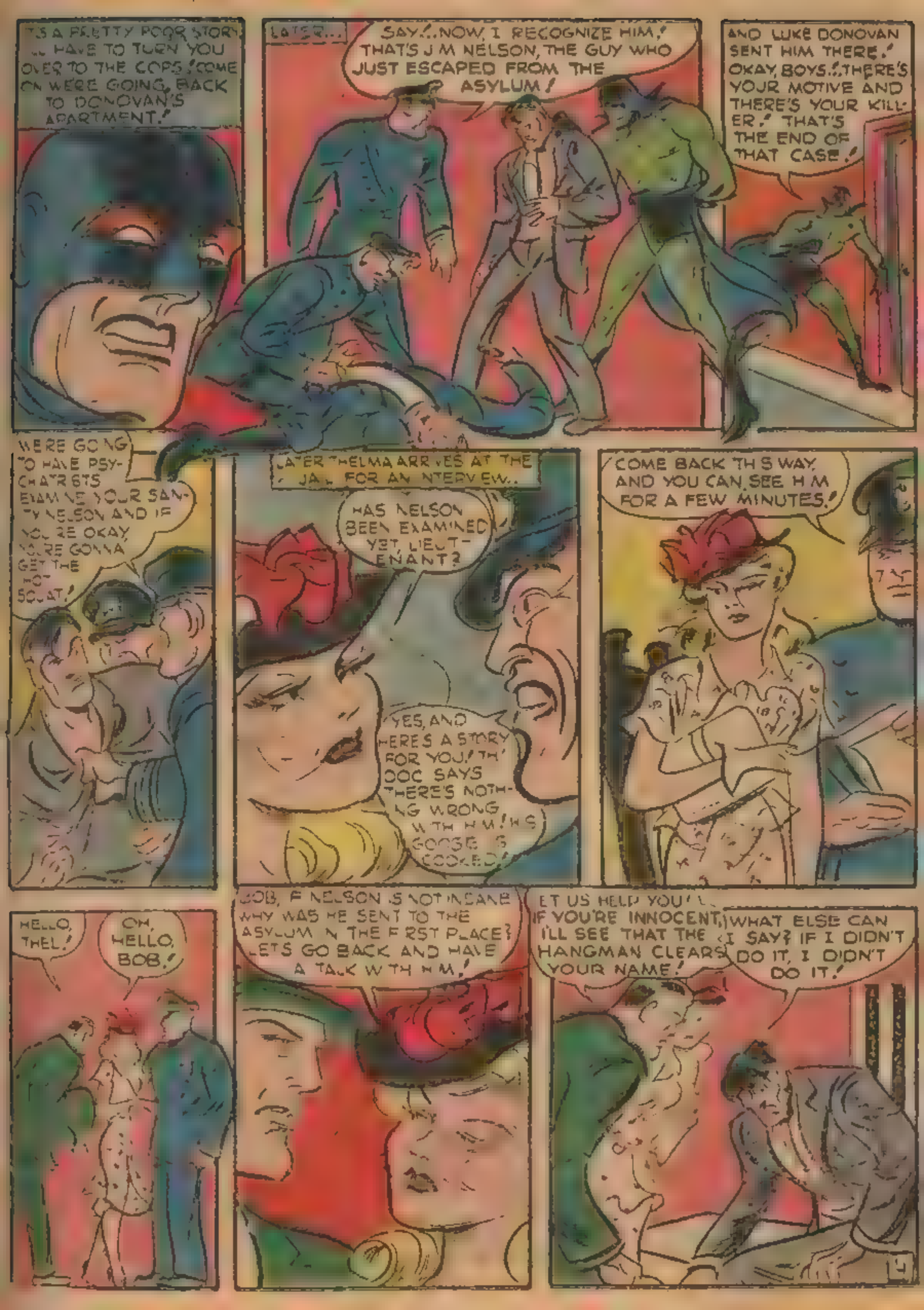
SOMETHING AWFULLY FUNNY IS GOING ON, THELMA! I'M GOING IN THERE AND SEE WHAT'S UP!
I'LL GO ON HOME, BOB! BUT PLEASE BE CAREFUL!
BOB ENTERS THE DOCTOR'S APARTMENT...
WELL!
DEAD! STRANGLED TO DEATH..AND IT JUST HAPPENED TOO! HIS BODY IS STILL WARM! I THINK THIS IS A CASE FOR THE HANGMAN!
A MOMENT LATER, BOB DICKERING BECOMES THE HANGMAN...
NOW, TO CATCH THAT FELLOW WE SAW OUTSIDE!
THE SHADOW OF THE GALLOWS FALLS ACROSS HIS FACE!
AS J M NELSON HURRIES ALONG THE STREET...
NO! I DIDN'T DO IT!
DID YOU MURDER LUKE DONOVAN? DON'T LIE!
I WAS GOING TO SEE HIM, BUT HE WAS DEAD WHEN I GOT THERE!


T'S A PRETTY POOR STORY ... HAVE TO TURN YOU OVER TO THE COPS! COME ON WE'RE GOING BACK TO DONOVAN'S APARTMENT!
LATER...
SAY!.. NOW, I RECOGNIZE HIM! THAT'S J M NELSON, THE GUY WHO JUST ESCAPED FROM THE ASYLUM!
AND LUKE DONOVAN SENT HIM THERE! OKAY, BOYS!.. THERE'S YOUR MOTIVE AND THERE'S YOUR KILLER! THAT'S THE END OF THAT CASE!
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE PSYCHIATRISTS EXAMINE YOUR SANITY NELSON AND IF YOU'RE OKAY, YOU'RE GONNA GET THE HOT SQUAT!
LATER THELMA ARRIVES AT THE JAIL FOR AN INTERVIEW..
HAS NELSON BEEN EXAMINED YET, LIEUTENANT?
YES, AND HERE'S A STORY FOR YOU! TH' DOC SAYS THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH HIM! HIS GOOSE IS COOKED!
COME BACK THIS WAY, AND YOU CAN SEE HIM FOR A FEW MINUTES!
HELLO, THEL!
OH, HELLO, BOB!
BOB, IF NELSON IS NOT INSANE WHY WAS HE SENT TO THE ASYLUM IN THE FIRST PLACE? LET'S GO BACK AND HAVE A TALK WITH HIM!
LET US HELP YOU! I... IF YOU'RE INNOCENT, I'LL SEE THAT THE HANGMAN CLEARS YOUR NAME!
WHAT ELSE CAN I SAY? IF I DIDN'T DO IT, I DIDN'T DO IT!

JIM, HERE'S YOUR BROTHER MIKE AND LAWYER SMEDLEY! THEY'RE HERE TO HELP YOU, IF YOU'LL LET THEM! WHAT DO YOU SAY?
JIM, I HAVE YOUR BEST INTERESTS AT HEART, AND AS YOUR LAWYER, I ADVISE YOU TO CONFESS AND PLEAD GUILTY! IT'S YOUR ONLY CHANCE!
SMEDLEY'S RIGHT JIM! AS MUCH AS I HATE TO SEE MY OWN BROTHER UP ON TRIAL FOR MURDER, IT'S THE ONLY THING TO DO!
HM... WAIT A MINUTE! JIM'S LEG WAS BLEEDING!. HE LEFT A TRAIL OF BLOOD STAINS! IF HE DIDN'T GO INTO DONOVAN'S APARTMENT THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANY STAINS ON THE RUGS!
SUDDENLY, JIM NELSON LEAPS AT HIS BROTHER...
YOU DIRTY DOG! YOU PROBABLY KILLED DONOVAN YOURSELF! HE FRAMED ME INTO GOING TO THE ASYLUM, AND YOU WERE BEHIND IT! I ACCUSE YOU OF HIS MURDER!
YOU'RE LOSING YOUR HEAD, JIM! CALM DOWN! THE EVIDENCE AGAINST YOU IS CONCLUSIVE!
BOB LEAVES, AND IN A FEW MINUTES, THE HANGMAN RACES TO DONOVAN'S HOME.
WHILE IN A HOTEL NOT SO FAR AWAY....
PHONE'S RINGIN', SLUGGER!
I KIN HEAR IT!
5
5

WHOSO? OH MIKE NELSON?..YEAH....YEAH I GOT YA! OKAY MIKE!
I'LL BE DOUBLE DOGGONED! JIM NELSON WASN'T LYING! THE BLOOD STAINS STOP AT THE FRONT DOOR! HE WAS NOT IN THE MURDER ROOM!
PHONE RINGING! AWFUL FUNNY SOMEBODY'D RING THE PHONE N A DEAD MAN'S HOME!
AS THE HANGMAN PICKS UP THE RECEIVER....
BUT SUDDENLY
BONG
SO THAT PHONE WAS JUST A GAG TO ATTRACT MY ATTENTION EH?
THE GUNMAN STICKS A GUN INTO HIS BACK!
STICK 'EM UP HANGMAN!
THE HANGMAN LASHES OUT WITH A VICIOUS ATTACK
POW
6

BUT A SECOND THUG ENTERS, AND CLUBS THE HANGMAN FROM BEHIND...
BOP
SOMETIME LATER, TWO PATROLMEN ENTER THE APARTMENT TO FIND..
HEY! THE HANGMAN!.. WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?
I GOT A NASTY CLOUT ON THE HEAD! I CAME HERE TO SEE WHETHER OR NOT, BLOOD-STAINS ARE ON THE RUG!
WELL, THERE ARE BLOOD-STAINS! THAT PROVES JIM NELSON WAS IN HERE!
THERE WEREN'T ANY STAINS THERE, WHEN I CAME IN! WHO-EVER KNOCKED ME OUT PLANT-ED THOSE STAINS!
MAYBE MIKE NELSONS ACCU-SATION AGAINST HIS BROTHER WASN'T SO CRAZY AFTER ALL! I'LL PAY HIM A CALL!
THE HANGMAN LEAVES...
MEANWHILE AT THE NELSON HOME...
NELSON AT HOME?
YES, MR. SMEDLEY! COME IN!
MIKE, I GOT BAD NEWS FOR YOU! THE HANGMAN TIPPED OFF THE COPS THAT YOUR BROTHER WAS NOT IN DONOVAN'S APARTMENT!
7

YOU MEAN—
EXACTLY! I MEAN THE HANGMAN WILL BE ON OUR TRAIL ANY MINUTE. WE'RE GETTING OUT OF TOWN!
AND DON'T GO SOFT ON ME YOU WEAK-LIVERED NINNY!
I-I DON'T WANT ANY-THING TO DO WITH THE HANGMAN!
NEITHER DO I! THAT'S WHY WE'RE LEAVING TOWN! THE COPS'LL NEVER PROVE ANY-THING ON US BUT I'VE HEARD STORIES ABOUT THE HANGMAN. I DON'T WANT TO SEE HIM PERSONALLY!
AS THE MEN REACH THE STREET...
GOOD LORD! IT-CAN'T BE!
THE HANGMAN!
LEAVING FOR THE WEEK-END, GENTLEMEN?
SURE, WE'RE GOING AWAY! WHAT OF IT? WHAT BUSINESS IS IT OF YOURS?
T...IT'S NO USE BLUFFING, SMEDLEY! TH.. THE HANGMAN KNOWS I TELL YOU!
8

I TOLD YOU NOT TO RAT ON ME AND I MEANT IT! I'LL KILL YOU BEFORE I'LL LET YOU SQUEAL! IN FACT I'LL DO IT RIGHT NOW AND TAKE NO MORE CHANCES!
BEFORE I'M THROUGH WITH YOU, YOU'LL BOTH WISH YOU WERE DEAD!
YOU KILLERS ARE ALL AWFULLY SOFT WHEN A GUY DOESN'T HAVE HIS BACK TURNED!
BOOM
KEEP AWAY FROM ME, HANGMAN! YOU WON'T GET ANYTHING FROM ME, I TELL YOU!
ME EVERYTHING I WANT! YOU'RE COMING BACK INTO THE HOUSE WITH ME, WHILE HE WRITES OUT THE CONFESSION!
NOW GO AHEAD, AND WRITE, NELSON--AND DON'T LEAVE ANYTHING OUT!

WHILE THE HANGMAN IS OCCUPIED WITH NELSON, SMEDLEY TAKES ADVANTAGE OF HIS DISTRACTION, AND MAKES A BREAK...
BUT THE HANGMAN TURNS AND SEES—JUST AS SMEDLEY CLAMBERS THROUGH THE WINDOW....
ALMOST PULLED A FAST ONE, DIDN'T YOU?
OUT THE WINDOW AND UP THE STREET, THE HANGMAN PURSUES THE FEAR-CRAZED KILLER AND THEN, THE CHASE LEADS HIM TO THE ROOF OF A BUILDING...
HA, HA, HA! I TRICKED HIM! HE'S GOING BY!
I'M FREE! FREE FROM THE HANGMAN AND THE GALLOWS!
AS THE LAWYER RACES ALONG THE LEDGE...
HE SLIPS!!
10

AND HURTLES TOWARDS THE STREET!
EIGHT STORIES TO THE GROUND! WHAT A WAY TO DIE, BUT IF IT HADN'T BEEN THIS WAY, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN THE GALLOWS!
C'MON, SERGEANT A MAN JUST FELL OFF THE ROOF!
HIS BROTHER MIKE AND SMEDLEY BRIBED DR. DONOVAN TO COMMIT JIM TO THE ASYLUM SO THEY COULD GET HIS INHERITANCE! DONOVAN GOT COLD FEET SO SMEDLEY KILLED HIM!
DEADER N A DOOR NAIL!
NEXT DAY.
WHAT WAS THE REAL STORY ON JIM NELSON BOB!
AT THE FRONT DOOR..
I'M JIM NELSON. I WONDER IF I COULD SEE MR DICKERING?
COME RIGHT IN, MR NELSON
I OWE SO MUCH TO YOU TWO BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY! WHEN YOU SEE THE HANGMAN, PLEASE TELL HIM HOW GRATEFUL I AM!
I'M SURE, JIM, THAT THE HANGMAN IS HAPPY JUST TO KNOW THAT AN INNOCENT MAN HAS BEEN ACQUITTED!

DANNY
LAND
IF YOU WERE TO SEARCH FAR AND WIDE YOU WOULD NEVER FIND A MORE HEART-LESS PERSON THAN PASHA-EL-RASHID, THE SULTAN OF SWAMI. SO, BEWARE, DANNY AS YOU WANDER THROUGH THE LAND OF MOROCCO KEEP YOUR PATH SEGREGATED, FOR THE SULTAN WOULD AS SOON CHOP YOUR HEAD OFF AS PAT.. AND HE LOVES TO EAT!
WRATH! NOT DONE TOO WELL! WHERE IS WIFE NUMBER TWELVE? SHE KNOWS HOW TO ROAST A PIG!
YOU ORDERED HER EXECUTED YOUR MAJESTY!
WELL, WE HAVEN'T RUN INTO MUCH ADVENTURE SO FAR!
BOY, I'M SPOILIN' FOR SOME REAL RED-BLOODED ACTION!

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, KUPP'E - YOU'VE BEEN THROWING THAT BOTTLE AROUND FOR HOURS! YOU'RE MAKING ME NERVOUS!
IT'S A QUEER LOOKING THING! WHERE DID YOU GET IT, ANYWAY?
OH, JUST PICKED IT UP ON THE BEACH!
SAY, THERE'S SOMEBODY COMING! MAYBE HE CAN DIRECT US!
HURRY UP 'N CALL HIM!
HOW FAR IS IT TO SWAMI, PLEASE?
ONE MILE - BUT IF YOU VALUE YOUR LIVES STAY AWAY I WARN YOU!
OH, SO THERE'S A TOUGH GUY THERE, HUH? WELL, JUST LEAD ME TO 'IM! ALL I WANT IS A CRACK AT 'IM! I'LL PULVERIZE HIM!
IMAGINE TRYING TO SCARE US OFF - HUH!
WELL, SO LONG! I THINK WE'LL GO THERE ANYWAY!
THERE IT IS, KUPPIE! AND AFTER TRAMPIN' THRU THE DESERT SO LONG, IT NOW IS A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES!
HEY, DANNY! D'YA REALLY THINK THAT SULTAN, THE ARAB TOLD US ABOUT IS REALLY AS MEAN AS HE SAID!
NOT THAT I'M SCARED, OF COURSE - I'M JUST ASKING!
WELL, IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE ANYONE COULD BE SO CRUEL! BUT WE'LL SOON FIND OUT FOR OURSELVES! HERE GOES!

FURTHER ADVENTURERS ENTER THE CITY AND ARE IMMEDIATELY ATTRACTED BY A LARGE CROWD!
WHAT'S GOIN' ON ANYWAY? I CAN'T SEE A THING!
ME NEITHER- MAYBE SOMEBODY'S RUNNIN' FOR ELECTION, HUH?
HA! ONE STROKE AND OUR SULTAN WILL HAVE ONE WIFE LESS TO PLAGUE HIM!
KUPPE! WILL YOU LOOKA THAT! THEY'RE GOING TO CHOP HER HEAD OFF!
YEAH (GULP) AND SHE'S SO PURTY, TOO!
C'MON WE'RE NOT GONNA LET 'EM DO IT!
YOU BETCHA WE'RE NOT! WE'LL KNOCK THEIR BLOCKS OFF!
YIP! YIP!
AS THE EXECUTIONER BRINGS HIS AXE BACK FOR THE DEATH STROKE, DANNY LASHES OUT WITH HIS MAGIC SWORD, AND—
UGH!
SWISH!
A TERRIFIC BATTLE ENSUES AGAINST OVERWHELMING ODDS!
I'LL BRAIN YOU—OOF
ARF! ARF!
I'VE GOT YOU NOW, YOU MEDDLING BRATS—AND I'D CHOP YOUR HEADS OFF TOO, IF I HAD MY AXE!
I'LL TAKE YOU TO THE SULTAN. HE'LL FIX YOU!

H,YA, SULTZ - OLE KID, OLE PAL, OLE SOCK! HOW'S YOUR HEALTH!
QUIET, YOU IMP! SO YOU TRIED TO STOP AN EXECUTION, EH? WELL, I HAVE JUST THE THING TO TEACH YOU A LESSON! TAKE THEM TO THE TORTURE CHAMBER!
JUST THEN, THE KING'S CHEF RUSHES IN—
YOUR MAJESTY, I HAVE TERRIBLE NEWS FOR YOU!
MUSHROOMS! YOUR FAVORITE DISH—THERE ISN'T A ONE TO BE HAD!
WHAT? NO MUSH-ROOMS.
IMBECILE! NINCOMPOOP! HOW CAN I EAT MY MEAL WITHOUT MUSH-ROOMS! I'LL HAVE YOUR LIMBS TORN OUT BY THE ROOTS FOR THIS! I'LL—
I KIN GET YOU MUSHROOMS, SULTAN IF YOU'LL LET US GO FREE!
IT'S A DEAL— BUT I'LL KEEP YOUR TWO FRIENDS HERE IF YOU FAIL!
IT'S IN THE BAG, SULT OLE CHUM! I'LL BRING YA BACK ALL THE MUSHROOMS YA CAN PUSH INTO THAT FAT FACE ...ER... I MEAN YOU KIN EAT!
ALL DAY LONG KUPPIE SEARCHES THROUGH THE CITY
SORRY! NO MUSHROOMS!
AND THEN HIS WANDERINGS CARRY HIM OUTSIDE THE CITY GATES WHERE HE SEES—
WOW! I FOUND 'EM! A WHOLE FIELD FULL O' MUSHROOMS!

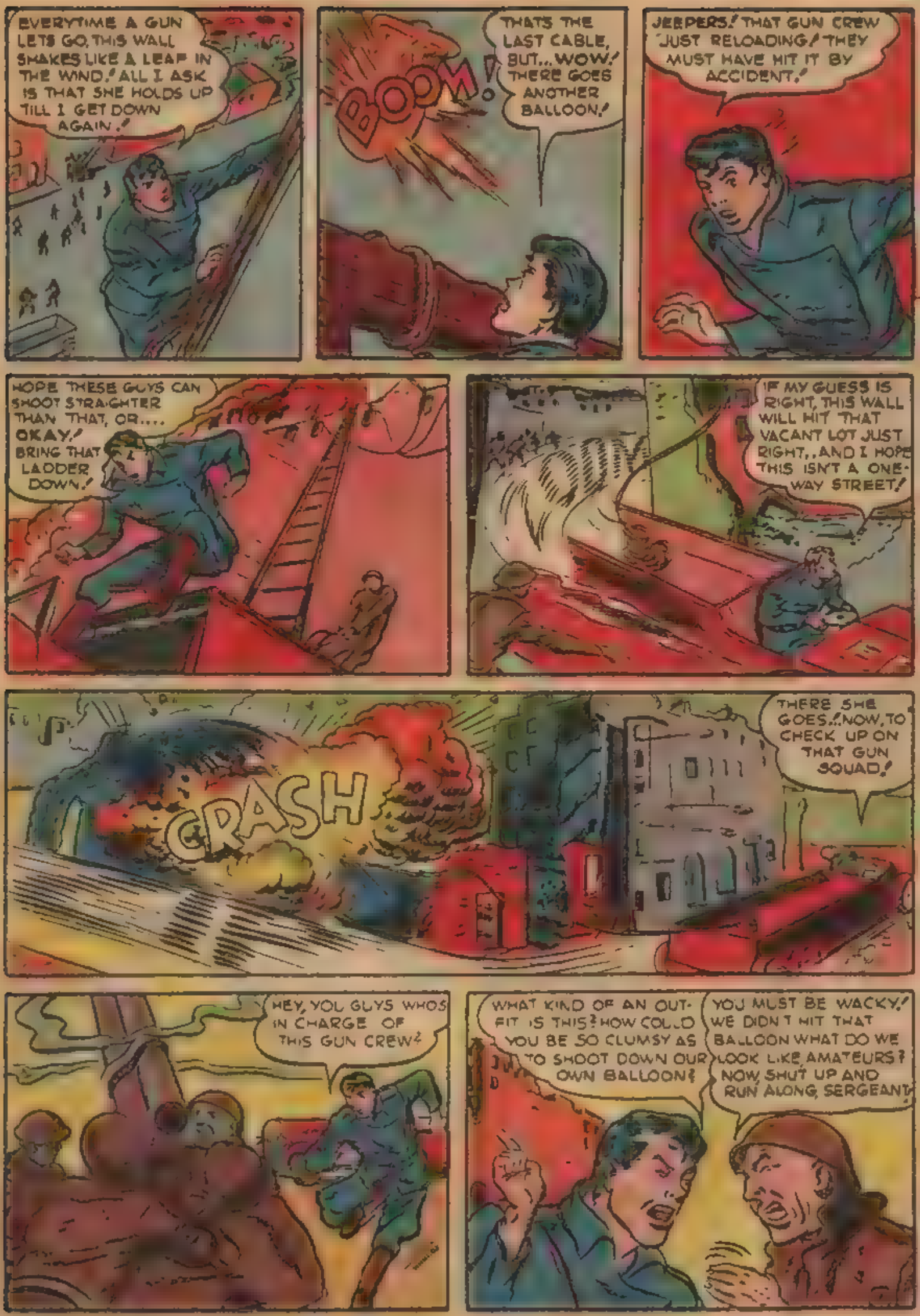
KUPPIE RETURNS FULL SPEED TO THE PALACE!
GLORY BE! YOU'VE GOT THEM!
I TOLD YOU I WOULD, DIDN'T I?
MM--MM-- THEY SMELL LICIOUS - I'LL HAVE THEM COOKED AT ONCE... AND YOU'RE GOING BE MY GUESTS OF HONOR AT THIS MEAL!
RELEASE DANNY AND SNAPPER IMMEDIATELY, GUARD!
YES YOUR MAJESTY!
'N HOW ABOUT YER WIFE, KING YOU'LL LET HER GO FREE TOO, HUH?
BOY, YOU SURE WERE A LIFE SAVER THAT TIME, KUPPIE!
OH! HERE COMES OUR DINNER, NOW
SAY.... THOSE MUSHROOMS! THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT 'EM I DON'T LIKE, YOUR MAJESTY!
WHAT! NOT LIKE MUSHROOMS! YOU MUST BE CRAZY!
THEN, AS THE SULTAN SWALLOWS THE FIRST
GULP!! KOFF! KOFF! SPUTTER OWOOOO!
I'VE BEEN POISONED! CATCH THEM! KILL THEM!
KUPPIE, YOU DOPE! THOSE WERE TOADSTOOLS! RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!
THERE THEY GO!
THROUGH THE WINDING STREETS, KUPPIE, DANNY, AND
FLEE WITH THE GUARDS N
HOT PURSUIT!

BOY! IT'S A GOOD THING WE DUCKED INTO THIS HOUSE! THEY ALMOST HAD US!
WELL, WHADDA WE DO NOW DANNY?
TRY N FIND MUSHROOMS, SO WE CAN SAVE THAT GIRL'S LIFE!
WHASSA MATTER, SNAPPER? . OH, I GET IT— YOU WANNA PLAY!
OKAY, FETCH THIS!
WUF! WUF!
BOY! THAT WAS QUICK! HERE, GIMME THAT BOTTLE!
THAT SNAPPER'S PRETTY SMART, HUH, DANNY!
OH! STOP PLAYING WE'VE GOT WORK TO DO!
THE BOTTLE SMASHES INTO A STONE!
CRASH!
KUPPIE! LOOK WHAT'S COMIN' OUT OF THE BOTTLE!
GEE WHIZ! WHAT IS IT, DANNY?
I AM A GENIE!
RUN, KUPPIE, SNAPPER!
LEGGO US, YA BIG PALOOKA! WE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO YOU!
HO! HO!
I MEAN YOU NO HARM.... YOU FREED ME FROM THE BOTTLE— I AM YOUR SERVANT! NAME ANY WISH AND YOU SHALL HAVE IT!
DANNY! DID YOU HEAR THAT? HE'S OUR SERVANT!
BOY, I COULD WISH FOR A LOTTA THINGS BUT RIGHT NOW, IT'S MUSHROOMS WE WANT!
6

MUSHROOMS, EH? YOU SHALL HAVE THEM — WHOLE FIELDS OF THEM!
GEE, THAT'S SWELL!
LATER.
SULTAN, WE GOT REAL MUSHROOMS TH S TIME!
I WARN YOU, IF THIS IS ANOTHER TRICK, YOU LL REGRET IT!
HMM! THEY'RE REAL ONES! AND DELICIOUS, TOO!
HOW CAN I EVER REPAY YOU BOYS? YOU'VE MADE ME A HAPPY MAN!
MORE MUSH-ROOMS, YOUR MAJESTY!
JUST DON'T BE CRUEL ANY MORE 'N I'LL GET YOU ALL THE MUSHROOMS YOU WANT!
THAT'S ALL R GHT I SUPPOSE - BUT BOY OBOY! IF I HAD THE NERVE I'D ASK FOR EVEN A BIGGER FAVOR!
THE GENIE DIVINES THE W SH KUPPIE IS THINK NG OF...
SO, THAT IS WHAT MY LITTLE MASTER WANTS, EH?
SUDDENLY, THERE IS A PUFF OF SMOKE, AND THE SULTAN VANISHES!
BOY! THAT'S WHAT I CALL SERVICE, DANNY!
HA! HA! HA! DO YOU THINK YOU CAN HANDLE ALL THOSE WOMEN KUPPIE?
DON'T M SS THE NEXT ISSUE OF DANNY IN WHICH HE MEETS UP WITH FATHER NEPTUNE AND BLACK BART THE PIRATE SCOURGE OF THE SEVEN SEAS IT'S THE MOST R R-T CKL NG OF ALL YARNS!

SERGEANT BOYLE
HEY! THEY GOT A BARRAGE BALLOON! LOOK AT 'ER COME!
HERE COME OUR SPITFIRES! NOW WATCH THOSE JERRIES RUN!
LATE IN THE AFTERNOON, A MUNITIONS TRAIN FROM THE COAST IS ATTACKED BY A SQUADRON OF NAZI BOMBERS!
BOYLE! THAT BALLOON'S LANDIN SMACK ON THE STATION!
ON THE STATION? TWERP! HE WAS TO MEET ME THERE!
TWERP! TWERP! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

THE SMOKE'S SO THICK IN HERE, I CAN'T... HEY! WHO'S THIS?
TWERP! OVER HERE! WAIT UP!
GANGWAY, BUDDY... I GOT TO MEET A TRAIN!
LOOK, DOPE, I'M BOYLE! YOU'RE MEETING ME, REMEMBER?
BOYLE! HIYA, KID!
LOOK! HERE COME THE FIRE-FIGHTERS! BOY, THEY DON'T LOSE ANY TIME!
SWELL JOB YOUR OUTFIT DOES, CAPTAIN, BUT SAY... DOESN'T THAT WALL LOOK A LITTLE WEAK!
THAT'S THE OLD TANNERY THAT WAS BURNED OUT LAST TUESDAY! SINCE THEN, WE'VE HAD ONE FIRE AFTER ANOTHER!
I SEE... YOU'VE NOT HAD TIME TO RIP IT DOWN! MAYBE, IF I GO UP AND FASTEN CABLES ALONG THE TOP...
GOOD HEAVENS, MAN... DO YOU REALIZE THERE'S AN AIR RAID ON? YOU'D MAKE A PERFECT TARGET FOR THE BOMBERS!
HEY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING? WAIT!
SORRY, CAPTAIN, BUT THAT WALL WILL COLLAPSE ANY SECOND, AND WE CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE ANY OF OUR FIREMEN!
AS FAST AS I HOOK A CABLE TO ONE WINDOW, SWING THE LADDER OVER TO THE NEXT ONE, TILL THEY'RE ALL ATTACHED! GOT THAT?
OKAY, SERGEANT, BUT THAT'S AN AWFUL RISK YOU'RE TAKING!

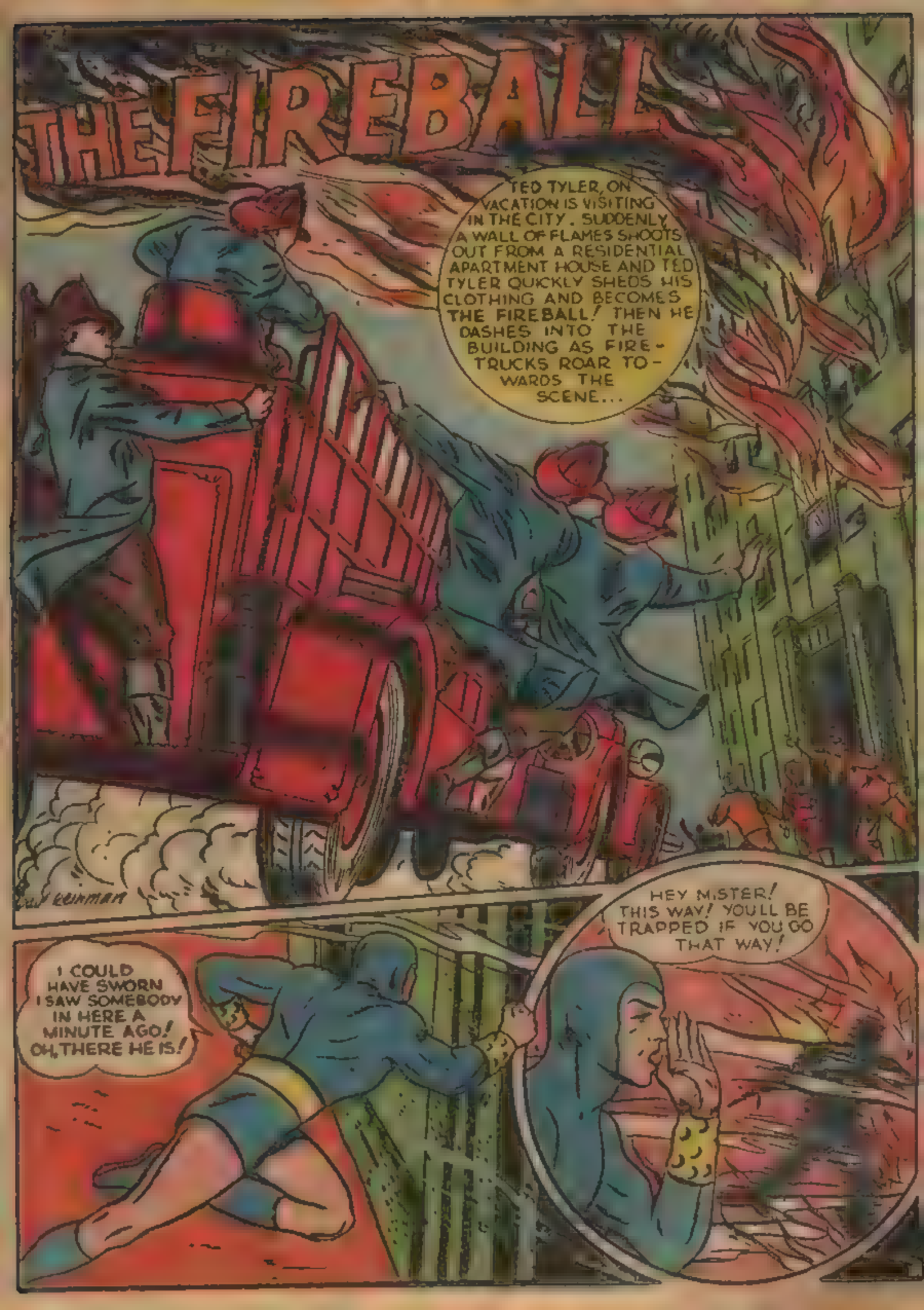

EVERYTIME A GUN LETS GO, THIS WALL SHAKES LIKE A LEAF IN THE WIND.' ALL I ASK IS THAT SHE HOLDS UP TILL I GET DOWN AGAIN.'
BOOM!
THATS THE LAST CABLE, BUT... WOW.' THERE GOES ANOTHER BALLOON.'
JEEPERS.' THAT GUN CREW 'JUST RELOADING.' THEY MUST HAVE HIT IT BY ACCIDENT.'
HOPE THESE GUYS CAN SHOOT STRAIGHTER THAN THAT, OR.... OKAY.' BRING THAT LADDER DOWN.'
IF MY GUESS IS RIGHT, THIS WALL WILL HIT THAT VACANT LOT JUST RIGHT,, AND I HOPE THIS ISN'T A ONE-WAY STREET.'
CRASH
THERE SHE GOES.'. NOW, TO CHECK UP ON THAT GUN SQUAD.'
HEY, YOU GUYS WHOS IN CHARGE OF THIS GUN CREW?
WHAT KIND OF AN OUTFIT IS THIS? HOW COULD YOU BE SO CLUMSY AS TO SHOOT DOWN OUR OWN BALLOON?
YOU MUST BE WACKY.' WE DIDN'T HIT THAT BALLOON WHAT DO WE LOOK LIKE, AMATEURS? NOW, SHUT UP AND RUN ALONG, SERGEANT.

GEE, THAT WAS SMART THINKIN', BOYLE! HEY, YOU DOPE.. WE GO THIS WAY! WHERE ARE YOU GOIN?
WHY THAT@!!?#* THICKHEADED UNAPPRECIATIVE SO-AND-SO!.. C'MON, TWERP, WE'RE GOIN' TO SEE THE GUY IN CHARGE OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENSE!
I SAID, MAJOR SCOTT WILL SEE YOU NOW!
HEY, SARGE.. YOU HEAR? THE MAJOR'S WAITIN' FOR YOU!
HUH? OH, YEAH! I WAS THINKING ABOUT THOSE DIM-WITTED GUNNERS!
SO YOU'RE THE FAMOUS SERGEANT BOYLE! SIT DOWN, SERGEANT! WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?
WHAT I HAVE TO SAY I CAN SAY STANDING MAJOR! I DON'T WANT TO MEDDLE IN YOUR DEPARTMENT, BUT WHEN OUR OWN DEFENSE UNITS BECOME AS INEFFICIENT AS ONE I HAVE IN MIND, I THINK I SHOULD SAY SOMETHING!
THEY SHOT DOWN OUR OWN BARRAGE BALLOON IN FRONT OF MY EYES AND THEN TOLD ME THEY DIDN'T DO IT! I UNDERSTAND THAT WE'VE LOST EIGHT BALLOONS IN THE BATTERSEA AREA SINCE YESTERDAY!
YOU'RE PERFECTLY RIGHT, SERGEANT, OUR DIFFICULTY IS THAT OUR CRACK GUNNERS MUST BE CONSTANTLY MOVED TO NEW DEFENSE POSITIONS AND THE MEN WHO REPLACE THEM ARE FREQUENTLY INFERIOR MARKSMEN!
TONIGHT FOR INSTANCE A HEAVY ATTACK IS EXPECTED IN THE CANAL STREET SECTION! SUPPOSING YOU TAKE CHARGE OVER THERE
I'LL BE GLAD TO, MAJOR, BUT I STILL THINK THAT YOU WANT A GOOD UNIT IN THE BATTERSEA AREA... WHY, IF THE LIGHT AND POWER STATION IS HIT..
YOU NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT THAT, SERGEANT, THE BATTERSEA POWER STATION IS BEING WELL TAKEN CARE OF! GOOD LUCK TO YOU!
WHAT KIND OF A GUY IS THE MAJOR, SARGE?
MAYBE I'M JUST GETTIN' JUMPY, BUT THERE'S A COUPLE THINGS ABOUT HIM I DON'T LIKE!
WELL, HERE'S OUR UNIT, AMBITIOUS LOOKING GANG, AREN'T THEY?
LOOK AT 'EM, SARGE! THEY'RE SHOOTIN' AT TIN CANS!

WELL, I'LL BE A MONKEY'S UNCLE! HOLD IT, TWERP THIS IS "WILD BILL" KREAMER! HE USED TO BE IN MY SQUAD IN FRANCE!
SEE HERE, YOU BIRDS, CAN'T YOU FIND....
SARGE BOYLE! I'LL BE A SONOVAGUN! HOW'S CORP COLLINS?
COLLINS? COLLINS? OH.. HIM! HE'S OKAY, I'M AFRAID.. BUT SAY I HEAR YOU'VE BEEN HAVING SOME PRETTY STIFF RAIDS DOWN HERE!
NAW.. THIS IS THE DEADEST SPOT EAST OF BROOKLYN! NO KIDDIN, SARGE, NOTHIN' HAPPENS AROUND HERE!
WHAT? SAY THAT AGAIN!
SURE! ASK ANY OF THE BOYS! JOHNNY, HERE, WAS ON THE BAYSWATER DEFENSE TILL LAST TUESDAY! HIS OUTFIT WAS SENT DOWN HERE 'AN THAT NIGHT, BAYSWATER TOOK THE WORST BOMBING SINCE THE WAR STARTED!
THAT'S RIGHT, AN' ANOTHER THING THAT SEEMED FUNNY WAS THE WAY OUR BARRAGE BALLOONS KEPT COMIN DOWN AFTER THE NEW UNIT TOOK OVER!
I HEARD THERE'S A NEW UNIT OVER AT BATTERSEA! THE OLD GANG WAS TRANSFERRED THIS MORNING... THEY'RE JUST AROUND THE CORNER!
HOLY MACKEREL! I SEE IT ALL NOW! IT SEEMS FANTASTIC, BUT....
..IT MUST BE THE RIGHT ANSWER! C'MON, BOYS, WIND THESE BALLOONS DOWN! WE'RE MOVING!
WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT, SARGE? WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
BATTERSEA IS A GOOD TEN MINUTES FROM HERE.. WE'VE GOT TO BE ON TIME!
THE GRIM PARADE GETS UNDER WAY...
SUDDENLY....

WHEEE
THERE GO THE SIRENS. THAT MEANS THE HE.NIES WILL BE HERE IN FIVE MINUTES!
I CAN SEE 'EM NOW, SARGE!
WERE HERE! LOOK, TWERP..THOSE BOYS HAVE DONE A GOOD JOB!..THERE'S NOT A BALLOON LEFT!
ALL RIGHT, MEN, WHEN I GIVE THE SIGNAL, RELEASE THE BALLOONS.
HERE THEY COME! LET 'ER RIP!
ACH! BALLOONS! IT'S A TRAP!
HOLY CATS! THOSE BOMBERS ARE GOING TO CRASH RIGHT ON THE POWER STATION! INTO THE TRUCKS, MEN! HEAD FOR THE BRIDGE!

NICE GOIN'! WE MADE IT! NOW, TO WIND UP THIS LITTLE SABOTAGE RING!
THE NAZI PLANES, TANGLED IN THE BALLOON NETTING ARE DRAGGED TOWARD THE RIVER BY THE TRUCKS, AND
HE HASN'T CAUGHT ME YET! IF I CAN GET TO THAT TRUCK, I CAN MAKE A BREAK FOR IT!
I'D SURE LIKE TO MEET UP WITH THE GUY WHO INVENTED THESE! I CAN'T BUDGE THE THING!
OOF!
HEY!
COME DOWN FROM THERE! I'M TAKING THIS TRUCK!
STUMBLING BACKWARD, TWERP ACCIDENTALLY KICKS THE BALLOON RELEASE.....
OOPS! SORRY!
I WAS SURE I SAW THAT PHONEY MAJOR A MIN TE AGO! AND WHERE'S TWERP?
TWERP! HAVE YOU SEEN THE MAJOR?
NO, I DIDN'T SARGE, BUT I JUST HAD AN ACCIDENT, CLUMSY OF ME.. LOOK!
HALP! GET ME DOWN!
WE... 'LL BE.. TELL WHAT TO DO YOU...CAN IT BE?
BUT IF THAT'S THE MAJOR, DON'T YOU THINK WE OUGHT TO GET HIM DOWN?
HA, HA, HA! NO, I THINK HE'S PERFECTLY SAFE UP THERE! HA, HA, HA! AT LEAST UNTIL THE BRING SQUAD
SERGEANT BOYLE MEETS CORPORAL COLLINS IN THE NEXT PEP COMICS


THE FIREBALL
TED TYLER, ON VACATION IS VISITING IN THE CITY. SUDDENLY A WALL OF FLAMES SHOOTS OUT FROM A RESIDENTIAL APARTMENT HOUSE AND TED TYLER QUICKLY SHEDS HIS CLOTHING AND BECOMES THE FIREBALL! THEN HE DASHES INTO THE BUILDING AS FIRE-TRUCKS ROAR TOWARDS THE SCENE...
KUHMAN
HEY MISTER! THIS WAY! YOU'LL BE TRAPPED IF YOU GO THAT WAY!
I COULD HAVE SWORN I SAW SOMEBODY IN HERE A MINUTE AGO! OH, THERE HE IS!

B..T THE FIGURE LASHES OUT WITH A VICIOUS BLOW!
HEY! YOU'RE JUST HYSTERICAL! TAKE IT EASY!
BUT THE STRANGE FIGURE SWINGS AGAIN AND THE BUTT OF HIS PISTOL CRASHES DOWN ON THE FIREBALL'S HEAD!
AS HE FALLS THE FIREBALL GRASPS AT HIS ASSAILANT!
LINK AND THEN...
THE FIREBALL SLUMPS UNCONSCIOUS TO THE FLOOR.
WITH THE CUFF LINK GRASPED FIRMLY IN HIS FIST!

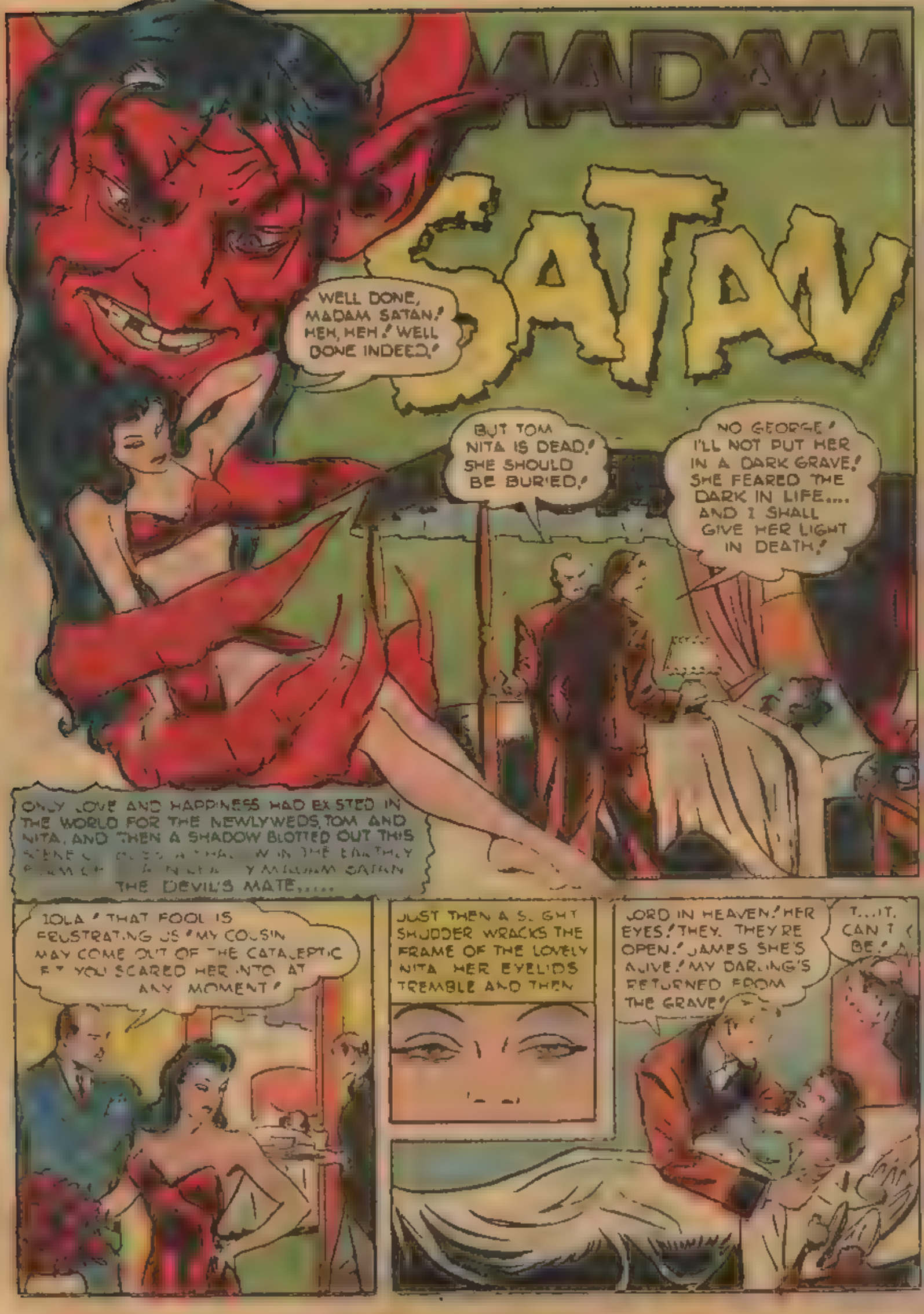
THE FIREMEN UNLOAD THEIR EQUIPMENT AND 30 SECONDS LATER BEGIN TO BATTLE THE FLAMES!
WOW! SOME BLAZE! BUT I GUESS MY BOYS HAVE GOT IT UNDER CONTROL.
EVERYTH NG PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY, CHUB?
SO FAR, SO GOOD, CHIEF! I THINK WE CAN MOVE IN CLOSER WITH THE HOSES NOW!
MOVE UP, MEN! COME ON! SHAKE A LEG!
WHAT S TH S? THERE'S SOMEONE IN THERE! HE'LL BE ROASTED ALIVE!
YOU CAN'T GO IN THERE, CHUB!
OH, YES I CAN!
OVER MY DEAD BODY! YOU WON'T HAVE A CHANCE IN THERE!
CHUB CHESTER BREAKS AWAY
COVER HIM WITH YOUR HOSES, MEN!

HERE HE IS! MUST HAVE TRIED TO GET UP A MOMENT AGO AND COULDN'T MAKE IT!
COME ALONG, BUDDY! THIS IS NO PLACE FOR HUMAN BEINGS!
CHIEF HARRIS' DAUGHTER, HEDY ARRIVES AT THE FIRE ..
DAD!
YOU HERE AGAIN? LEAVE ME ALONE! CHUB IS IN THERE R.SKING HIS NECK TO SAVE SOME MUG!
HERE I AM, BOYS! I FEEL LIKE A STEAMED CLAM BUT THIS GUY IS STILL ALIVE!
GET THE OXYGEN TANK OVER HERE! QUICK!
HERE, HEDY! WATCH HIM A MINUTE, WILL YOU? I'VE GOT TO GET BACK WITH THE OTHERS
HOW'S HE COMING, HEDY?
HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT, CHUB- I THINK
IT'S-IT'S AN ANGEL! I GUESS I'M IN HEAVEN, EH, KID?
HUMPH! THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. YOU'RE OKAY.

NEXT DAY AT THE HOSPITAL
HIYA, KID! WHO ARE ALL THE REST OF THE PEOPLE IN YOUR PARADE?
YOU'RE AWFULLY FRESH.... YOU CAME VERY NEAR BEING KILLED YESTERDAY!
BUT THE MINUTE I SAW YOUR GLEAMING LAMPS, I KNEW I'D BE ALL RIGHT!
THIS IS CHUB CHESTER, THE MAN WHO SAVED YOUR LIFE!
HELLO! FEELIN' BETTER?
MUCH BETTER, AND THANKS.
IT'S MY DUTY TO ASK YOU WHY YOU WERE IN THAT BUILDING. ANY EXPLANATION?
WHY? THINK I SET FIRE TO IT?
MAYBE YOU DID! BECAUSE I THINK SOMEBODY DID!
WHY? WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?
BECAUSE I... BECAUSE SHE THINKS SHE'S A GREAT DETECTIVE!
OH, IS THAT SO?
IT WAS THIS WAY, CHIEF! I WAS GOING BY AND I THOUGHT I SAW SOMEONE IN THERE SO I TRIED TO SAVE HIM!
WELL, LET ME WARN YOU THAT IF YOU WANT TO SAVE PEOPLE FROM FIRES, JOIN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT!
HA HA! THAT'S A HOT ONE! IMAGINE YOU JOINING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT!
NOW THAT YOU'VE BROUGHT IT UP, I AM A FIREMAN BUT WOULDN'T MIND JOINING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT IN THIS CITY!

AND SO, DURING THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOW, T.M GOES THROUGH THE ENTIRE SERIES OF TESTS, NECESSARY TO MAKE HIM A FULL-FLEDGED MEMBER OF THE METROPOLITAN FIRE DEPARTMENT

AND THEN, ONE DAY...
ALL SET BELOW?
ALL SET, TYLER! THIS IS YOUR LAST TEST! COME ON, BOY! JUMP!
HOW'S THE SMART ALEC, DAD?
SMART ALEC OR NOT, HE'S THE BEST FIREMAN WE'VE EVER TURNED OUT IN THIS CITY!
HELLO, ANGEL EYES! HOW'S TRICKS?
HUMPH!
CONGRATULATIONS BOY! YOU'VE BATTED 1.000
THANKS CHIEF, BUT EXCUSE ME A MOMENT, WILL YOU?
GOIN MY WAY IN YOUR CAR?
NO! I'M GOING TO CALL ON JIM OLIVER AT HIS OFFICE!
JIM OLIVER, EH? HE OWNED THE BUILDING THAT BURNED, DIDN'T HE? WELL SEE THESE INITIALS ON MY HAND? THEY WERE BURNED THERE BY A CUFF LINK OF THE GUY IN THE BUILDING I TRIED TO SAVE.
THE MARKS ON MY HAND ARE "O.L." BUT THEY ARE REVERSED SO THEY MUST HAVE BEEN THE INITIALS "J.O." — AND THAT STANDS FOR JIM OLIVER DOESN'T IT?
FURTHERMORE, YOU SAID YOU THOUGHT SOMEONE SET THE BUILDING ON FIRE, NOW—
GOSH, TED, DO YOU SUPPOSE JIM OLIVER SET FIRE TO HIS OWN BUILDING?
I DON'T KNOW! BUT HOW'S ABOUT THE TWO OF US TRYING TO FIND OUT?
IT'S A DEAL, TED! I'M RIGHT WITH YOU!
FOLLOW THE FIREBALL'S ADVENTURES NEXT MONTH


MADAM SATAN
WELL DONE, MADAM SATAN! HEH, HEH! WELL DONE INDEED!
BUT TOM NITA IS DEAD! SHE SHOULD BE BURIED!
NO GEORGE! I'LL NOT PUT HER IN A DARK GRAVE! SHE FEARED THE DARK IN LIFE.... AND I SHALL GIVE HER LIGHT IN DEATH!
ONLY LOVE AND HAPPINESS HAD EXISTED IN THE WORLD FOR THE NEWLYWEDS, TOM AND NITA. AND THEN A SHADOW BLOTTED OUT THIS
THE DEVIL'S MATE.....
IOLA! THAT FOOL IS FRUSTRATING US! MY COUSIN MAY COME OUT OF THE CATALEPTIC AT ANY MOMENT!
JUST THEN A SLIGHT SHUDDER WRACKS THE FRAME OF THE LOVELY NITA. HER EYELIDS TREMBLE AND THEN
LORD IN HEAVEN! HER EYES! THEY. THEY'RE OPEN! JAMES SHE'S ALIVE! MY DARLING'S RETURNED FROM THE GRAVE!
T...IT. CAN'T BE!

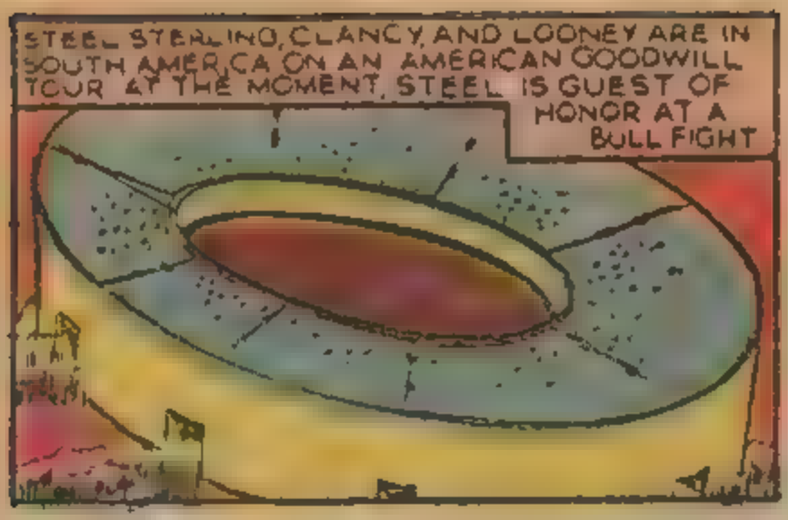
THE SERVANT FLEES FROM THE ROOM, PANIC-STRICKEN!
IT'S THE DEVIL'S WORK! I'M NOT STAYING HERE ANY LONGER!
NOW WHAT? LOOKS LIKE I SHAN'T HAVE MY REVENGE AFTER ALL..AND YOU'RE OUT OF A COUPLE OF DISCIPLES FOR THE DEVIL!
PERHAPS NOT! DID YOU HEAR THAT SERVANT YELL THAT SHE STILL BELONGS TO THE GRAVE?
WELL I WANT YOU TO SPREAD THE BELIEF AMONGST THE VILLAGERS! MAKE THEM BELIEVE SHE'S A VAMPIRE..AND LEAVE THE REST TO ME!
THE BLACK-HEARTED COUSIN WASTES NO TIME...
SHE'S AN UNHOLY CREATURE, I TELL YOU!
I REMEMBER PA TELLIN' ME A STORY ABOUT WERE-WOLVES NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT!
EDGAR, OUR GRANDCHILD SAID SHE SAW SOMETHING AT THE WINDOW LAST NIGHT!
WHADDA YA THINK OF TOM'S WIFE, AL!
WELL, I DUNNO!
I, MYSELF, SAW ONE OF THOSE THINGS WHEN I WAS A KID!
THEN, ONE NIGHT, AS A HEAVY, OMINOUS STILLNESS BLANKETS THE TOWN, A BAT WINGS ITS WAY HIGH ABOVE...
...SOARS THROUGH AN OPEN WINDOW...
...THEN, A QUICK TRANSFORMATION, AND THE DIABOLICAL MADAM SATAN STANDS FORTH. STEALTHILY SHE BENDS OVER THE SLUMBERING CHILD, HER TEETH REACHING FOR THE SOFT, YOUNG THROAT.....
NEXT MORNING...
HEAVENS, JOHN! MY INTUITION WAS RIGHT! SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO OUR DAUGHTER!

JOHN! SHE.. SHE'S...WHITE AS A SHEET! ALMOST BLOOD-LESS!
AND THOSE MARKS ON HER THROAT.. THEY'RE TOOTH MARKS!
CLARA! OUR DAUGHTER HAS BEEN ATTACKED BY A VAMPIRE!... AND I KNOW WHO IT IS!
YOU... YOU MEAN TOM'S WIFE, NITA?
I'LL DRAW THE CURTAINS DEAR AND LET SOME LIGHT IN!
TOM, PLEASE, DON'T!
BUT DARLING, YOU ALWAYS LOVED THE SUNSHINE!
YES, BUT THE SUN HURTS MY EYES. AND SINCE I'VE RECOVERED FROM MY ILLNESS, I DON'T FEAR THE DARKNESS ANYMORE!
THAT NIGHT..
WHAT DO YOU MAKE OUT OF JOHN HAWK'N'S STORY ABOUT A VAMPIRE ATTACKING HIS DAUGHTER?
I THINK IT'S TRUE!
YOU BET IT'S TRUE! IT'S MY COUSIN NITA! I WARNED TOM TO BURY HER WHEN SHE DIED, BUT HE WOULDN'T LISTEN!
JUST THEN...
LOOK! HERE COMES LEM SPRAGUE ...AND HE'S CARRYIN' HIS SON!
THE BOY MUST BE ILL.. WHAT HAPPENED, LEM?
LOOK AT HIM, AND SEE FOR YOURSELF!
WHY HIS FACE IS BLOODLESS, AND THOSE MARKS ON HIS THROAT.
A VAMPIRE!

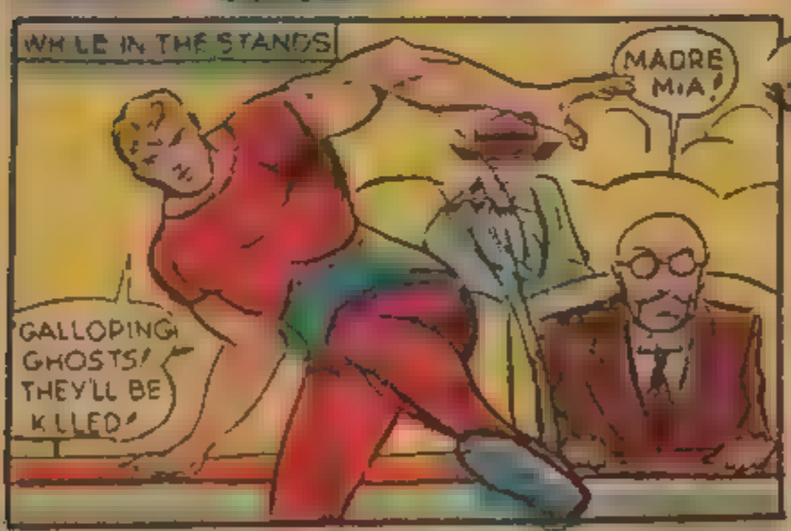
THAT PROVES IT IS TOM'S WIFE! WELL FIX HER!
GET A SHARP STAKE! WE'LL PUT AN END TO THAT FOUL CREATURE ONCE AND FOR ALL!
SOON AN ENRAGED MOB, LED BY THE EVIL COUSIN, MAKES FOR TOM'S HOME..
THERE SHE IS! DRIVE THE STAKE THROUGH THAT VAMPIRES HEART!
YOU MISERABLE SCUM! CALL MY WIFE A VAMPIRE WILL YOU?
LET GO OF HIM, TOM!
AAARGH!
YES, TOM LET GO OF HIM! THE TRUTH SHOCKS YOU, DOESN'T IT? BUT YOU MUST FACE IT!
SHE IS A VAMPIRE! LOOK AT HER HANDS, AND SEE FOR YOURSELF!
NO! IT'S NOT TRUE!
BLOOD!
TOM! DON'T LET THEM TAKE ME! THERE'S NO BLOOD ON MY HANDS! PLEASE BELIEVE ME!
I'LL NEVER BELIEVE ANYONE AGAIN! TAKE HER! KILL HER!
NOW I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU SUDDENLY FEARED THE SUNLIGHT.. YOU... YOU... GHOUL!
NO! NO! IT'S NOT SO!
4

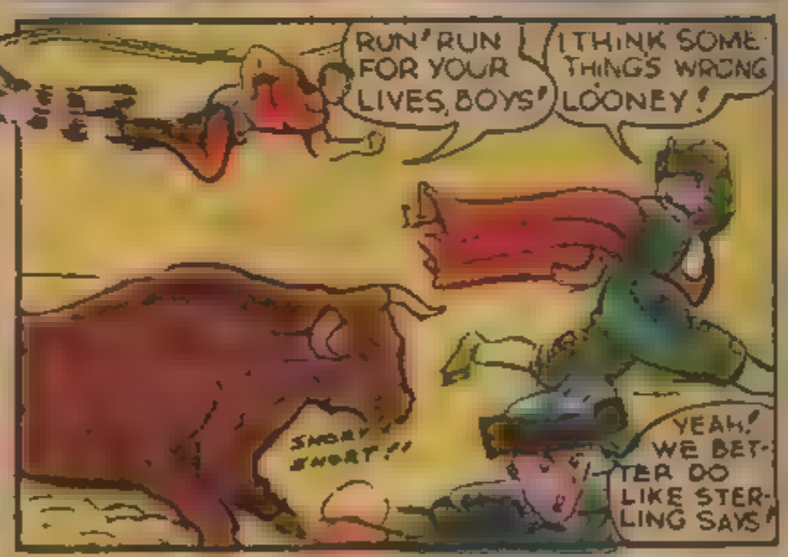
TOM, DARLING, HELP!
HOLD HER AGAINST THAT TREE! WE'LL DRIVE THAT STAKE THROUGH HER HEART! IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO KEEP THESE THINGS IN THEIR GRAVES!
SUDDENLY A STRANGELY CLAD FIGURE RADIATING LIGHT, APPEARS.
STOP!
WHO..WHA.. HOW'D YOU GET HERE? WHO ARE YOU TO TELL US TO STOP?
I'M BROTHER SUNBEAM! I AM THE GOOD THAT EXISTS IN ALL YOUR HEARTS! YOU MUST NOT KILL THIS GIRL, I TELL YOU!
SHE IS NO VAMPIRE, BELIEVE ME!
SOMEHOW, I DO BELIEVE YOU!
ME TOO!..I.. I GUESS I MUST HAVE BEEN OUT OF MY MIND!
WHILE MADAM SATAN, UNAWARE OF THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT, PROCEEDS WITH THE REST OF HER PLAN...
KISS ME, TOM! KISS ME!
HA, HA WE'RE SUCCEEDING!
CLOSER AND CLOSER TO THE FATAL LIPS OF MADAM SATAN TOM IS DRAWN..AND THEN, JUST AS SHE PREPARES TO PLANT THE KISS OF DEATH....
TOM! STOP! DON'T KISS HER! SHE'S EVIL! SHE'S DEATH!
KISS ME, YOU FOOL! KISS ME!
LOOK AT ME, TOM! CAN'T YOU SEE HOW I LOVE YOU! PERHAPS I WAS WRONG IN NOT TELLING YOU ABOUT MY FIRST CATALEPTIC FIT, BUT....
CATALEPTIC FIT! GOOD LORD, NITA! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?
5

COWARD! GEORGE TOLD ME HE WAS GOING TO TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT!
SO! HE'S SAID TOO MUCH, HAS HE?
KEEP AWAY FROM ME!
HELP ME, IOLA! HE MEANS TO KILL ME!
HELP YOURSELF YOU FOOL! YOU'RE OF NO MORE USE TO ME!
AS THE STRICKEN COWARDLY GEORGE FLEES... AND STUMBLES ON THE TOP STEP OF THE PORCH
LORD IN HEAVEN! THE STAKE! IT'S GONE RIGHT THROUGH HIS HEART!
UGH!
AS THE WICKED COUSIN STIFFENS IN DEATH, HIS LIPS STRETCH INTO A FIXED HORRIBLE SMILE, AND HIS FACE BECOMES THAT OF AN IMP OF HADES
OF HADES MADAM SATAN WENDS HER WAY WITH THE BLACK SOUL OF THE COUSIN..
MASTER! I HAVE BROUGHT YOU A NEW DISCIPLE!
BAH! THAT SCOUNDREL BELONGED TO ME ANYWAY! YOU HAVE FAILED ME AGAIN!
...LE BACK ON EARTH.
NITA WHAT CAN I SAY WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE YOU FORGIVE ME?
NOTHING TOM DARLING! I LOVE YOU TOO MUCH TO BE ANGRY WITH YOU!
GOOD FOR YOU, TOM AND NITA! I KNEW YOU'D CONQUER!
AS THE SUN RISES ON A NEW AND FRAGRANT WORLD
LIFE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL, EH, MY FAITHFUL LITTLE BURRO?
BUT LIFE CAN ALSO BE TEMPESTUOUS BROTHER SUNBEAM.. FOR WHILE MADAM SATAN EXISTS, EVIL STALKS THE EARTH. SEE FOR YOURSELF IN NEXT MONTHS PEP COMICS!


STEEL STERLING, CLANCY AND LOONEY ARE IN SOUTH AMERICA ON AN AMERICAN GOODWILL TOUR AT THE MOMENT. STEEL IS GUEST OF HONOR AT A BULL FIGHT

WHILE CLANCY AND LOONEY ARE BUSY GETTING THEMSELVES INTO TROUBLE!
THESE UNIFORMS WE JUST BOUGHT SURE LOOK NIFTY, CLANCY!
YOU SAID IT, LOONEY! ONLY I WISH I KNEW WHAT THEY USE 'EM FOR!



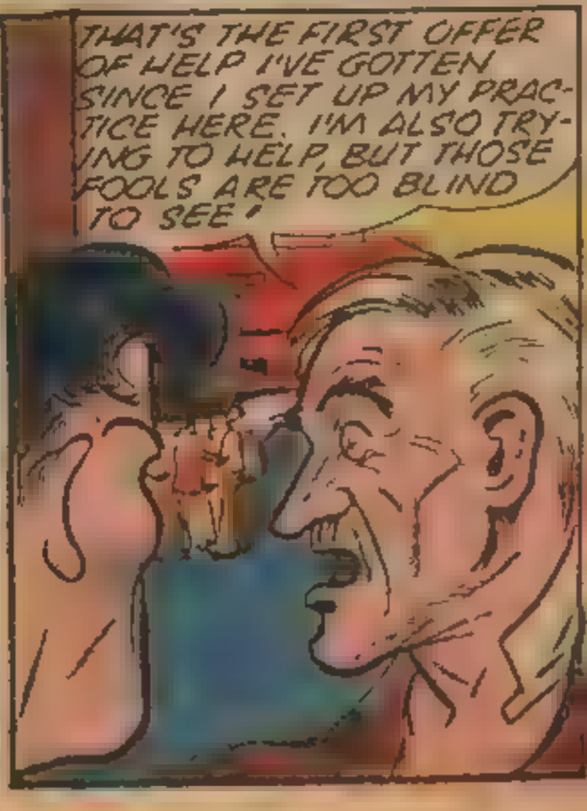


AND THIS IS JUST ONE OF A SERIES OF BREATHTAKING PULSE-RACING INCIDENTS HOW DOES STEEL STERLING FARE IN HIS DELICATE MISSION AS AMBASSADOR OF GOODWILL TO THE SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS? STEEL HAS NEVER ENCOUNTERED MORE DANGEROUS AND TREACHEROUS OPPOSITION THRILL WITH STERLING LAUGH UNTIL YOUR SIDES ACHE WITH THOSE DAFFYDILLS, CLANCY AND LOONEY IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF ZIP COMICS!!

OCTOBER ZIP COMICS WILL BE ON SALE AT YOUR NEWSSTAND SOON. LOOK FOR IT!.....

KAYO WARD

KAYO WARD, STILL WANDERING ABOUT THE COUNTRY, ARRIVES AT THE OIL TOWN OF BOSWELL, OKLAHOMA, AND SEES -


THAT'S THE FIRST OFFER OF HELP I'VE GOTTEN SINCE I SET UP MY PRACTICE HERE. I'M ALSO TRYING TO HELP, BUT THOSE FOOLS ARE TOO BLIND TO SEE!

I'M DR. GRAVES'. I'VE BEEN TRYING TO CONVINCE THEM TO TAKE ANTI-CHOLERA INJECTIONS-FREE OF CHARGE. BUT
I THINK MAYBE I KIN CONVINCE 'EM FOR YOU WAIT HERE!
WH WHAT CAN YOU DO?
KAYO USES HIS OWN BRAND OF CONVINCING
OWOO! LET ME OUTTA HERE!
ALL RIGHT, DOC, LET'S GO BACK IN THERE, NOW. I THINK THEY'LL LISTEN TO REASON!
HURRY UP WITH THOSE INJECTIONS, DOC, BEFORE THAT WILD MAN COMES BACK!
GREAT CAESAR LOOK'S LIKE A CYCLONE HIT THIS PLACE!
WAIT A MINUTE. THE DOCTOR HASN'T INJECTED YOU YET!
ER AH.. YEAH. I WUZ JUST HURRYIN' OVER TO HIM!
WELL I GUESS YOU GOT MOST OF THEM.
I'M GRATEFUL TO YOU WON'T YOU COME HOME WITH ME? I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET MY FAMILY!
AT THE DOCTOR'S HOME-
MY WIFE, AND MY DAUGHTER, MARTHA THIS GENTLEMAN'S NAME IS TOM BROWN

OH MY, MR. BROWN! YOUR FACE! DID YOU HAVE AN ACCIDENT?
MOTHER, PLEASE!
THAT WAS TACTLESS OF MOTHER. TOM'S FEELINGS WERE DEEPLY HURT!
YES MARTHA. HE'S A FINE CHAP. LET'S TRY TO BE VERY CONSIDERATE OF HIS FEELINGS!
WHILE BACK IN THE SALOON..
INJECTIONS, NONSENSE! (HIC)
THAT'S WHAT I SAY, DOC!
I'VE BEEN THE TOWN DOCTOR FOR YEARS (HIC). IF THERE WAS ANY CHOLERA AROUND, I'D KNOW ABOUT IT JUST AS FAST AS THAT QUACK!
JUST THEN-
WHAT IN..
JUPITER! IS IT THE CHOLERA?
HE'S DEAD BUT HE DIDN'T DIE FROM CHOLERA!
IT'S THAT DOC GRAVES AN' HIS INJECTIONS. HE'S POISONED US ALL, THAT'S WHAT!
AT THAT MOMENT IN DR. GRAVES' HOME..
GOLLY THIS IS THE MOST DELICIOUS MEAL I EVER TASTED!
OH, YOU'RE JUST FLATTERING ME, MR. BROWN!
JUST THEN-
DOCTOR! MY LITTLE GIRL. SHE'S BEEN RUN OVER! PLEASE DO SOMETHING!
3

YOUR DAUGHTER JUAN'S BADLY HURT, MRS. BARNES. I'LL HAVE TO OPERATE IMMEDIATELY!
FATHER! THERE'S A CROWD STORMING TOWARD OUR HOUSE! WHAT IN THE WORLD CAN THE MATTER BE?
YOU'SE FELLOWS'LL HAVE TO BE QUIET. THE DOCTOR IS OPER-ATIN'!
THAT QUACK AIN'T GONNA OPERATE IN THIS TOWN!
HE'S KILLED ONE PEO-SON A-READY
THEY MUST BE OUT OF THEIR MINDS. I DON'T CARE WHAT THEY DO WITH ME, BUT IF I DON'T OPERATE IMMEDI-ATELY, THIS CHILD WILL DIE!
YOU GO RIGHT AHEAD, DOC. I'LL SEE THAT THEY DON'T BOTHER YOU!
HE'S POISONED US ALL, I TELL YA. STRING HIM UP, I SAY!
THAT'S THE TALK!
YOU FELLAS ARE ALL EXCITED OVER NUTHIN'! NOW IF YOU'LL JUST GO ON HOME, AND
STAND ASIDE, WE WARN YOU, IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GET HURT!
NO. I AIN'T GONNA STAND ASIDE!
STRING HIM UP, TOO!
SMACK 'IM DOWN!

OKAY. START SMACKIN' ME DOWN. BUT I'M GONNA DO A LITTLE SMACKIN' OF MY OWN!
KAYO FLINGS HIMSELF DESPERATELY INTO THE SAVAGE MAN-PACK!
A FREE-FOR-ALL ENSUES!
BEATEN BY A MULTITUDE OF FLAILING FISTS, KAYO STANCES HIS
AND PUTS UP A HEROIC FIGHT AGAINST OVERWHELMING ODDS
UNTIL AT LAST, HE IS OVERCOME AND SUBJECTED TO THE MOST SEVERE PUMMELING OF HIS LIFE BY THE ENRAGED MOB!
SUDDENLY—
STOP, MEN! STOP, I TELL YOU! DOC GRAVES DIDN'T KILL BILLY BEAVER
I EXAMINED HIM AND FOUND HE'D DIED OF A HEART FAILURE!
WHAT!

THE MOB, NOW PACIFIED, GENTLY BEARS THE BATTERED KAYO INTO THE DOCTOR'S HOUSE.
PUT HIM ON THE COUCH, BOYS.
POOR, DEAR BOY! THOSE SCARS ON HIS FACE HAVE OPENED AGAIN HOW NOBLE AND BRAVE HE IS!
WELL THE OPERATION IS DONE. JOAN WILL BE ALL RIGHT!
DOC I WANNA APOLOGIZE. THAT'S THE SLICKEST SURGERY I EVER SAW!
I'M A DRUNKARD MYSELF. BUT I'M NOT TOO FAR GONE TO GIVE CREDIT TO A GREAT DOCTOR!
GEE DOC" WE FEEL LIKE HEELS"
'N JUST TO SHOW YA WE-MEAN IT, YA CAN INJECT EVERY MAN-JACK IN THIS TOWN, AND TWICE ON SUNDAYS IF YA LIKE!
THANK YOU BOYS. YOUR CONFIDENCE MEANS A GREAT DEAL TO ME. BUT IT'S TOM BROWN WHO REALLY SHOULD BE THANKED!
TOM" I THINK I COULD PATCH YOUR FACE UP, FINE. WILL YOU LET ME TRY?
GO AHEAD N' LET I'M TOM
WELL, WHY NOT! YOUSE COULDN'T MAKE IT ANY WORSE!
AND MAYBE A LOT BETTER. I'LL START IMMEDIATELY!
CAN DOCTOR GRAVES FIX KAYO'S FACE? THE NEXT ISSUE OF PEP COMICS HAS THE THRILLING ANSWER!
6

BENTLEY
IT IS A BLEAK NIGHT THAT SHROUDS LONDON. A NIGHT OF THICK ROLLING FOG AND WEIRD DANCING MISTS. AS BENTLEY SITS SMOKING A QUEER PREMONITION OF SOMETHING ABOUT TO HAPPEN PERVADES HIM. THEN, THE DOOR BURSTS OPEN AND A
BENTLEY! WE'RE IN DREADFUL DANGER!
THE WITCH IS AFTER US! IT'LL KILL US ALL, I TELL YOU!
EASY, OLD MAN! SUPPOSE YOU TELL ME WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!
I AM LORD ROTHMERE OF KENNISTON CRAG! MY SON HAS JUST BEEN MURDERED--MURDERED BY THE WITCH'S CURSE! I SCOFFED AT THE LEGEND OF THE CURSE THAT HANGS OVER KENNISTON CRAG!..BUT NOW, I BELIEVE IT! IT ALL BEGAN FIVE CENTURIES AGO, WHEN ONE OF MY ANCESTORS, THE DUKE OF ROTHMERE, BUILT THE CASTLE!

ONE DAY AN OLD HAG WAS DRAGGED BEFORE THE DUKE ACCOMPANIED BY A SOBBING MOTHER WITH A DEAD BABY IN HER ARMS
EXCELLENCY! THIS WOMAN IS A WITCH!
YES EXCELLENCY, IT'S TRUE (SOB, SOB) SHE PLACED A CURSE ON MY CHILD AND.. AND HE DIED!
BY MY BONES! THE TOT BEARS NO MARK OF DISEASE OR VIOLENCE AT THAT!
FOUL CREATURE, I HAVE BEEN TOLD BEFORE ABOUT YOUR EVIL PRACTICES, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST PROOF I'VE HAD WITH MY OWN EYES! I SENTENCE YOU TO THE FLAME-WHEEL--TO BE BURNED TO DEATH!
THE DUKES ORDERS WERE PUT INTO IMMEDIATE EXECUTION, AND THEN, AS THE FLAMES BEGAN TO LICK ABOUT HER WRETCHED BODY.
THE WITCH UTTERED A HORRIBLE CURSE!
I SHALL RETURN, DUKE, EVERY HUNDRED YEARS, AND KILL YOUR DESCENDANTS UNTIL THE LAST OF YOUR FAMILY IS BLOTTED FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH!
I AM A RATIONAL MAN, BENTLEY, AND I DID NOT PLACE MUCH STOCK IN THIS FAIRY TALE... BUT AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT, I..I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK!
WE WERE ALL SEATED AROUND THE FIREPLACE DISCUSSING ORDINARY THINGS AND SIPPING TEA..
SUDDENLY MY SON STAGGERED TO HIS FEET AND HIS FACE GREW LIVID AS HE GASPED
I..I'M BEING STRANGLED! AARGH!

WE WERE ALL TOO STUNNED FOR A MOMENT TO DO ANYTHING! I WAS THE FIRST TO BE AT HIS SIDE, BUT IT WAS TOO LATE..HE WAS ALREADY DEAD
AND THEN I REMEMBERED THE WITCH'S CURSE! IT MUST BE TRUE! WE'RE ALL DOOMED!
SUPPOSING WE TAKE A RUN OUT TO YOUR PLACE, NOW!
HOURS LATER, BENTLEY AND LORD ROTHMERE ARRIVE AT KENNISTON CRAG...
I'VE BROUGHT BACK BENTLEY OF SCOTLAND YARD, JEEVES! HAS ANYTHING ELSE HAPPENED?
NO, LORD ROTHMERE!
BENTLEY IMMEDIATELY INSPECTS THE CORPSE...
THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT HIM BEING STRANGLED, AND BY A SOLID PAIR OF HANDS, I'D SAY!
I'LL HAVE A LOOK AROUND THE ROOM!
DON'T YOU THINK IT WOULD BE BETTER IF WE ALL HAD A SPOT OF TEA FIRST, LORD ROTHMERE?
DREADFULLY SORRY TO BE SO POOR A HOST, SIR RODERICK! TEA WOULD BE JUST THE THING!
LET ME POUR IT FOR YOU, INSPECTOR!
THIS IS SIR RODERICK EPSWORTH, FAMOUS HISTORIAN, AND A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE, BENTLEY!
HOW DO YOU DO!
THIS IS MY BROTHER, SIR REGINALD!.. MY SON, TOM, AND DAUGHTER, MELINDA!
INSPECTOR, DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE SUCH THINGS CAN HAPPEN?
NO!

WELL, I DO! THIS IS THE WITCH'S WORK, ALL RIGHT, AND NEITHER YOU NOR ANYBODY ELSE CAN HELP US!
YOU APPEAR ANXIOUS FOR ME NOT TO INVESTIGATE, SIR REGINALD!
AND NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN FIND IN THE LIBRARY!
BENTLEY PROCEEDS TO TAP THE WALLS FOR SECRET PANELS..
HMM.. THEY ALL SEEM SOLID ENOUGH!
SUDDENLY A STRANGE NUMBNESS STEALS OVER BENTLEY ROOTING HIM TO THE SPOT...
AND THEN A DAGGER SEEMINGLY RESOLVES ITSELF FROM THIN AIR AND FLOATS TOWARD HIM...
SWEAT POURING DOWN HIS FACE, THE INSPECTOR STRUGGLES TO OVERCOME HIS NUMBNESS...
AND, WITH A SUPREME EFFORT, BENTLEY PRESSES A BUTTON ON HIS CANE, EXPOSING A SWORD. THEN, JUST AS THE FLOATING DAGGER IS AT HIS THROAT.....
BENTLEY LASHES OUT...

I WAS ATTACKED, APPARENTLY BY YOUR WITCH OF KENNISTON CRAG!
HA, NOW, MAYBE YOU'LL BELIEVE THAT A WITCH'S CURSE HANGS OVER OUR CASTLE!

WELL, LORD ROTHMERE, I'VE HAD THE PLEASURE OF MEETING YOUR WITCH, BUT I'M AFRAID I'LL HAVE TO DISILLUSION YOU ABOUT ITS GHOSTLY QUALITIES!
WHAT'S THAT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, BENTLEY?

I MEAN THAT THE THING WHICH KILLED YOUR SON AND ALMOST GOT ME WAS NO CURSE, GHOST OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT! IT WAS A HUMAN BEING RIGHT HERE IN THIS ROOM---AND I THINK I KNOW WHO!

INSPECTOR BENTLEY KNOWS THE MURDERER--- DO YOU?

1 LORD ROTHMERE

2 SIR RODERICK

3 MELINDA

4 TOM

5 SIR REGINALD

MARK YOUR CHOICE AGAINST THE LIST ABOVE....THEN TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE AND SEE BENTLEY SOLVE THE CASE OF THE WITCH'S CURSE!

YOU, SIR RODERICK, ARE THE MURDERER OF LORD ROTHMERE'S SON AND THE ONE WHO JUST ATTACKED ME!
YOU'RE MAD! I WAS WITH LORD ROTHMERE ALL THE TIME!
THAT'S RIGHT, BENTLEY!
NO, HE WASN'T WITH YOU AT ALL! HE JUST MADE US THINK WE SAW WHAT HE WISHED US TO, BY SLIPPING AN INDIAN DRUG INTO OUR TEA! UNFORTUNATELY FOR HIM, I KNOW THE DRUG MYSELF!
BUT IF YOU DIDN'T SEE SIR RODERICK, HOW DO YOU KNOW IT WAS HIM?
BECAUSE, WHEN I LASHED OUT WITH MY CANE-SWORD, I FELT IT RIP THROUGH CLOTH! I KNEW THAT THE GUILTY ONE WOULD WASTE NO TIME IN CHANGING CLOTHING, AND SURE ENOUGH, SIR RODERICK WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS CHANGED HIS SUIT!
BENTLEY! HE'S TRYING TO ESCAPE!
I KNEW HE WOULD-- AND I WAS PREPARED FOR IT!
BENTLEY'S SWORD-CANE FINDS ITS MARK....
OWOO!
CURSE YOU, BENTLEY! THE FORTUNE BURIED BY THE DUKE OF ROTHMERE IN THE CELLAR OF THIS CASTLE COULD HAVE BEEN MINE, BUT FOR YOU!
SO THAT'S WHAT'S BEHIND IT ALL!
I SEE IT ALL NOW-- SIR RODERICK, AS A HISTORIAN, AND A FRIEND OF THE FAMILY'S, KNEW MORE ABOUT YOUR CASTLE THAN YOU DID! HE TRIED TO FRIGHTEN YOU AWAY SO HE COULD GET THE HIDDEN FORTUNE!
BENTLEY MAKES HIS REPORT....
...AND SO THAT'S THE STORY, CHIEF!
FINE WORK, BENTLEY! IT'S COMFORTING TO KNOW IN THESE TROUBLED TIMES, WE CAN DEPEND ON SOMEONE LIKE YOU!
YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS BENTLEY'S NEXT CASE, "FLAMING DEATH"
16